

UNLV

MAGAZINE

FALL 2015

+ ALUMNI OF
THE YEAR

+ BATTLING
ALZHEIMER'S

+ MEET THE
GONZALEZ
TWINS

BMI's SECOND DECADE

MISSION, MONEY, AND DREAMS

A ROUNDTABLE ON UNLV'S BLACK MOUNTAIN INSTITUTE AND THE MEANING OF MODERN LITERATURE

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Henderson's
Black Mountain

Photo
illustration by
Aaron Mayes

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"Shockingly, bracingly good..."

"Chapman shows a kind of fearless momentum. Who knows where it will lead her next?" concluded a 2010 *LA Times* review of her first novel, *Your Presence is Requested at Suvanto*. But we know the answer: It led the alumna back to us.

Chapman is now one of the key voices guiding the Black Mountain Institute into its second decade, **Page 20**. And she earned this year's Alumna of the Year award for the College of Liberal Arts, so she happens to be featured in this issue twice. She shares a reflection on becoming her mother's caretaker in our Moment of Doubt series, **Page 36**.

[Photo by Aaron Mayes]



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

My Mantra

In my 11 months as UNLV's president, many people have heard me say what a great opportunity it is to be at this university, in this place, at this time. In a roundabout way, it's become my mantra. I have witnessed and continue to see incredible things happening on campus that support our Top Tier vision.

Without a doubt, UNLV's academic year is off to a great start — ranking as the second most diverse campus in the nation by U.S. News & World Report, boosting our fundraising efforts to a five-year high of \$75 million in private donations, welcoming our largest-ever freshman class and improving our retention rate by five-percentage points, and securing funding during the legislative session for the UNLV School of Medicine and a new building for the William F. Harrah College of Hotel Administration.

These accomplishments only scratch the surface.

Our magazine reflects the stories that demonstrate our aspiration to reach the top. You'll find a great example of this in our cover story "The Meaning of the Mountain" on page 20. Some of the key players behind the Beverly Rogers, Carol C. Harter Black Mountain Institute discuss its role and growth, which is now entering its second decade. It's an excellent model of UNLV leading in the arts and the social sciences, and how the international community is taking notice.

Other highlights include:

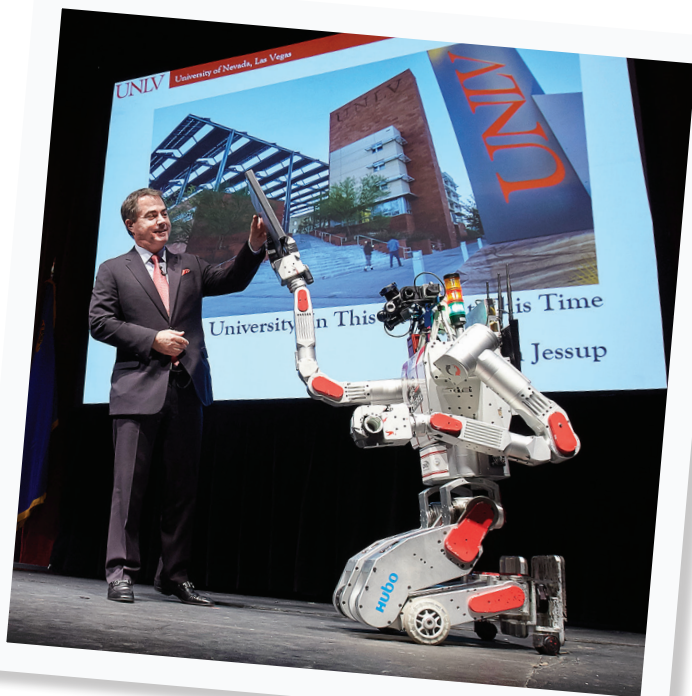
- Our partnership with the Cleveland Clinic Lou Ruvo Center for Brain Health to secure a \$11.1 million grant from the National Institute of Health that supports research projects related to Parkinson's and Alzheimer's.
- Our new research agreement with Tesla Motors that taps into our engineering expertise in battery manufacturing.
- Our selection — in a partnership with the Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority — to host the final presidential debate at the Thomas & Mack Center on Oct. 19, 2016, just prior to the general election.

I know many of our successes would not be possible without your support. I have been particularly impressed with our alumni, like those honored during this year's Homecoming activities (page 30). They continue to improve our community and advocate for us.

In closing, I want to share my thanks for all your help and your commitment to UNLV. It's a true pleasure to serve you and our campus community.

Len Jessup

UNLV President



President Len Jessup highlighted UNLV's Top Tier strategic plan in his State of the University address — after he got a little help from UNLV's humanoid robot, Metal Rebel, who hand-delivered a copy of the speech.

Learn more about the Top Tier plan: unlv.edu/toptier

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Nope, not Photoshopped

By far our most liked and shared photo on Facebook ever was UNLV photographer **Aaron Mayes'** shot of the Sept. 27 super blood moon eclipse. We promise, there were no Photoshop shenanigans at play; just a really talented photographer behind the camera. Mayes took the image just before the moon slipped behind clouds, disappointing many sky-watching Southern Nevadans.

Double Take

CNN journalist **Anderson Cooper** posted a selfie on Facebook after the annual UNLV Foundation dinner Oct. 14. "In Las Vegas, at an event for UNLV," he posted. "I met someone who looks a lot like me. It kind of freaked me out." Cooper was there as the keynote speaker. His doppelganger, Dr. Randal Shelin, president of Desert Radiologists, was repeatedly mistaken for Cooper at the event honoring UNLV donors. Cooper became a top donor himself when he announced that he was giving his entire speaking honorarium back to UNLV.



FROM THE UNLV NEWS CENTER >

ON "NEW FACES: STEVEN BICKMORE," WHO JOINED THE COLLEGE OF EDUCATION FACULTY AFTER TEACHING HIGH SCHOOL FOR 25 YEARS:

Loved you as a teacher Mr. Bickmore ...I wasn't always the best student (wasn't a fan of *Martin Chuzzlewit*), and I talked a lot, but I sure appreciate how much fun you made learning and how much you cared about your students. I clearly remember you talking to us about the importance of never getting a credit card and what a total waste of your money it would be. Such a wise man! I hope you always know how important you were in so many kids' lives.

Michelle Bates Peterson

ON "5 THINGS I WISH YOU KNEW ABOUT INTERSEX PEOPLE" IN WHICH SOCIOLOGY PROFESSOR GEORGIANN DAVIS DISCUSSES MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT INTERSEX AND HOW DOCTORS OFTEN PERFORM UNNECESSARY SURGERIES:

"Your point about how these issues affect all of us hits right on the mark ... Like everything else, physical characteristics should be seen as a normal curve with plenty of room for variation, not as a perfect rectangle with only two possibilities. Not to mention the fact that everyone wants their medical providers to be open, honest, and informative about our health ... The idea of undergoing surgery without informed consent or of pushing parents to make split-second decisions under pressure when it isn't necessary, should be horrifying to everyone, not just intersex people and their allies."

Blaine Pennock

ON "THE STARTING BLOCK," WHEN IT WAS FIRST PUBLISHED ONLINE. READ THE STORY NOW ON PAGE 10.

When I was working full time and going to school full time (12 credits) my GPA averaged about 3.8 per semester. ... I decided to step down to part-time at work. I thought my GPA was going to improve even more but my gpa went the other way. I did so poorly and got my first letter grade of C. ... I knew when I was working full time

and going to school full time that I couldn't afford to procrastinate, so I studied more efficiently and used my time more wisely. This semester I will be taking 16 credits.

Sacha Bell

unlv.edu/news

The **UNLV News Center** will keep you connected to the campus in between issues of *UNLV Magazine*. In addition to feature articles, you'll find videos, slideshows, and links to events. Sign up for its weekly newsletter: news.unlv.edu/newsletters.



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THE Flashlight

UNLV to host 2016 presidential debate

UNLV and Las Vegas will take center stage when the university hosts the final 2016 presidential debate at the Thomas & Mack Center on Oct. 19, 2016.

“(The debate) will bring a unique energy to one of the most diverse campuses in the country,” said UNLV President Len Jessup, noting that the event will allow students to experience the political process firsthand.

Co-chairing the Las Vegas organizing committee are Jessup and Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority (LVCVA) President/CEO Rossi Ralenkotter, ’71 MBA. The LVCVA partnered with UNLV in submitting the application to the Commission on Presidential Debates.

As an early caucus state, Nevada plays a key role in the election process, and hosting the debate will continue to increase the global visibility of the state. The debate will attract an estimated 3,500 media representatives from around the world and generate at least \$50 million in publicity for Las Vegas and UNLV, according to data from 2012 presidential debate sites.



UNLV President
Len Jessup



Keeping Our Doctors Here

UNLV's new School of Medicine is aimed at tackling our state's doctor shortage by addressing some key infrastructure needs — such as creating more residency programs in local hospitals — but it's also working to turn its students into committed Nevadans. “We wholeheartedly believe if our students develop relationships throughout our community from day one, it will influence their decision to stay in Nevada long term,” said Dr. Barbara Atkinson, the school's dean. If all goes well with the accreditation process, the school will welcome its first class as soon as August 2017. Here are three ways the school will promote those community ties:

1 Saving lives from the start:

During their first six weeks on campus, all students will attain certification as emergency medical technicians. “From the beginning, they will be providing trauma care in the homes and streets of Las Vegas,” Atkinson said.

2 Becoming involved: Students will spend several hours a week during their first year in a community service project of their choice and then a full month in service during their fourth year. The school currently is developing ties with local faith-based and health service organizations, such as Opportunity Village, Lutheran Social Services, and Nathan Adelson Hospice, to set the groundwork for future programs. “In addition to academic achievement, we expect to attract a student body reflective of the diversity of Southern Nevada,” Atkinson said. “We also

want our students to demonstrate personal qualities of community activism, leadership, optimism, and dedication to serving.”

3 Building relationships:

Students will spend almost a full year in clerkships. In a community clinic setting, they will experience firsthand how outpatient medicine integrates such specialties as family medicine, internal medicine, neurology, obstetrics and gynecology, pediatrics, psychiatry, and surgery. They'll round out their year with intensive inpatient experiences in anesthesiology, internal medicine, and surgery. “This replaces the traditional block rotation model in which students learn one specialty at a time in a hospital setting and then move on,” Atkinson said. Instead, they'll get to know patients over time and develop relationships with local health care professionals.

— CATE WEEKS



Materials collected for the Southern Nevada Jewish Heritage Project. (Below) Tommy McDonald, Merv Adelson, Gaby Whitaker, Irwin Molasky, Valda Boyne Esau, and Howard Capps bury a time capsule at the opening of Stardust Golf Course, 1961 (University Libraries Special Collections)

Documenting Our Jewish History

Since the 1930s, when a small group of about 25 people gathered in the back of a store to pray and to teach their children about Judaism, the Jewish community has made a significant impact in shaping Las Vegas. Now the University Libraries' Special Collection Division is ensuring the historical record of the community's contributions will be collected, digitized, and shared.

Through the Southern Nevada Jewish Heritage Project, the libraries is capturing stories of Jewish individuals describing their move to Las Vegas in search of economic opportunity and then contributing to the city's evolution from railroad town into the tourism and entertainment capital that it is today.

The project began in July 2014 thanks to a one-year grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Ser-



vices and administered by the Nevada State Library and Archives. The community continues to be a strong project supporter, donating historical records, financial resources, and time via four community advisory boards.

In the project's first year, the University Libraries recorded 58 new oral histories, digitized

about 40 older oral histories, acquired 19 new archival collections, scanned more than 9,500 pages and images of content, and wrote approximately 125 biographies and organizational histories.

This year, the libraries plans to launch a web portal so the project's treasures can be accessed, studied, and shared. It hopes to raise funds to extend it into a three-year initiative.

More: digital.library.unlv.edu/jewish

DON'T MISS IT

Opera: UNLV Opera Theatre presents *Trial by Jury*, a comic opera in one act from the famed duo Gilbert and Sullivan, and *The Beautiful Bridegroom*, a comic opera by contemporary composer Dan Shore. 7:30 p.m. Nov. 12-13, Beam Music Center.

Business Mixer: The UNLV Alumni Association's Rebel Business Network and Young Alumni group will host a joint mixer to help grads network with business owners and grow their connections. 6 p.m., Nov. 17. Crave American Kitchen, Downtown Summerlin.

Mixer in Hawaii: Join UNLV President Len Jessup at a reception for alumni, parents, and friends in Honolulu. 3 p.m., Nov. 22. The UNLV Alumni Association is planning a number of regional events in the next year. Find out more: unlvalumni.org.

Lecture: University Forum presents "Pushing Boundaries: How Airlines and Airports Connected Cities of the American West with the World" by Honors College professor Daniel Bubb. 7:30 p.m. Dec. 1, Barrick Museum.

A Christmas Carol: Nevada Conservatory Theatre presents the holiday classic. Dec. 3-12. Performing Arts Center.

The Calendar

For details on these events and a full listing of activities, visit unlv.edu/calendar

BRIEFLY
.....**‘Reading’
Images**

A museum can be a lab for lingering. When students from UNLV and other area schools take a field trip to the Marjorie Barrick Museum, it's a chance to gaze, not glance, at art. They are challenged to “read” the works slowly.

“I’ve never been to a gallery like this before,” said Anayeli De Leon, an English 101 student on a tour of the Barrick’s “Recent Acquisitions” exhibition.

Students select a work as a prompt for an analytical essay, which teaches them to treat images like text, to find signifiers, or simply respond to seeing brushstrokes in person. Some realize how art can be more than a quick visual reference, a trap we all fall into when bombarded by images, especially in Las Vegas.

— ED FUENTES



A training specialist in the School of Social Work, Judy Tudor helps new child welfare workers.

Avoiding the What If's

JUDY TUDOR HAD DRIVEN along Bonanza Road in Las Vegas dozens of times searching for an apartment building with a white cross. *Find the cross, find the mother*, she thought.

Tudor, then a new caseworker in child welfare, was trying to help a 10-year-old boy who was having a hard time in foster care. The boy was loyal to his mom and adamant she was in the building with the cross. Two years later, Tudor was driving that same stretch again and there it was: a white fleur de lys. By that time, the loyal little boy had already been placed with a new family.

“If I would have put him in the car with me and driven up and down looking, maybe he would have seen that,” said Tudor. “Maybe he would have been able to have a conversation with her. Maybe she would have been able to give him permission to be with another family.”

Now a training specialist in the School of Social Work, Tudor and colleague Toni Chance share their experiences to help those new to the child welfare field avoid their own “If only I had” moments.

The School of Social Work partners with Clark County Department of Family Services (DFS) to deliver skill-based programs for professionals who

work with children and families. UNLV has developed courses geared specifically for DFS staff.

Tudor and Chance also run the Nevada Child Welfare Training Academy, a 12-week program required for new DFS employees. Trainees have varied work and life experiences. Some hold degrees in social work, while others are shifting careers. DFS staff provide agency-specific information while Tudor and Chance walk students through mock cases from beginning to end, sharing personal experiences such as Tudor’s search for the white cross.

When she became a caseworker, Tudor remembers facing a stack of 60 files and having little direction. “I now get to spend up to 12 weeks — before anyone gets a desk or gets cases — to really talk with them about how you approach this work. To me, it is a real blessing to be able to do that and share with them the things that I have learned,” Tudor said.

—AFSHA BAWANY

More: Judy Tudor, '94 BA Social Work, '97 MA Social Work, has funneled her own challenges growing up into a career helping kids through tough situations. Read her inspiring “From Foster Care to Fairy Tale Ending” at unlv.edu/news.

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College of
**HOTEL
ADMINISTRATION**



The academic induction event UNLV Creates helps students grasp the difference between a true university experience and simply taking classes. Pictured is this year's keynote speaker, Rehan Choudhry, founder of the Life Is Beautiful festival.

The Starting “Block”

An overhaul to advising and an emphasis on a full course load are getting today's Rebels off to the right start.

BY BRIAN SODOMA

Carl Reiber sums up his own freshman experience with this story: “The parents rolled up to school, threw you out the door, and said ‘Come back in four years with a degree.’ At orientation, a dean would say ‘Look to your left, look to your right — half of those people will be gone in a year.

“To me, that’s just irresponsible.”

Thankfully, today’s UNLV freshmen don’t experience this ineffective trial-by-fire approach. Recent changes aimed at boosting graduation rates are ensuring students start their college careers with clear paths to attaining their degrees.

It started with administrators recognizing the changing student profile. Contrary to UNLV’s commuter school reputation, today’s full-time student contingent tops 70 percent. And, according to survey research, they arrange their work schedules to give priority to their studies.

“They may be going home to sleep at mom and dad’s house, but they are coming on campus and staying all day,” Reiber said. “Our student population is increasingly the ‘traditional’ student you’d see at any major institution. This has been a game changer.”

SET UP FOR SUCCESS

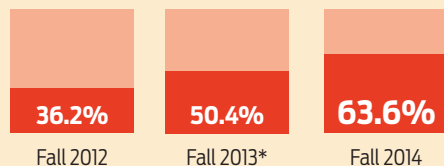
Several years back, officials realized that orientation and advising programs were failing to set new students up for success. First-generation college students in particular found too little guidance on the mechanics of getting through the system.

Gayle Juneau-Butler, assistant vice provost for retention, progression & completion, said changes have made the advising process more intentional. “Advising holds” once frequently blocked new students from registering until they connected with an advisor. Now advising sessions are incorporated into the required new student orientation, making it much easier to get that initial session ticked off the to-do list.

One of the best changes, official said, is block scheduling. UNLV graduates from just a few years ago might remember the universally frustrating freshman experience of being last in line to register and then finding many sessions closed. In fall 2013, advisors began automatically enrolling incoming freshmen in classes appropriate for their major, including their required math and English courses and the freshman seminar course.

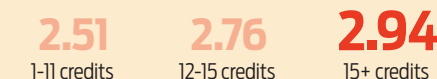
Percentage taking 15+ credits

first-time, degree seeking freshmen, age 18-24



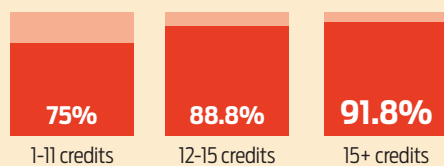
* block scheduling begins

Fall 2014 Freshmen GPA



2014 persistence rates

Percent of first-time, degree-seeking freshmen who enroll in the spring after their first fall semester



Left to completely to their own devices, officials found, some students were confused by their many choices. And, Reiber said, “they often put off the required courses they were intimidated by, such as math. Down the road, this backfired when they couldn’t enroll in a needed upper division class because they hadn’t fulfilled that math prerequisite.”

BLOCKED, BUT NOT LOCKED IN

Las Vegas Valley native Nicole Thomas bristled at the thought of block scheduling when she enrolled as a freshman in fall 2013. Her path to become an evolutionary ecologist was pretty clear to her and she felt hemmed in by her initial schedule. “I was surprised at how flexible they were,” she said of her first advising session. “They switched everything around. Compared to high school, they were so helpful.”

For students with less concrete career plans, block scheduling has removed anxiety over what to take. It also eliminates the trial-and-error process of hunting down open sessions. “Block scheduling essentially guarantees them a spot in class,” Reiber said. “It lets them focus on changing just the one or two classes to suit their preference rather than trying to cobble together everything all at once.”

15 TO FINISH

The first advising session is a critical moment in what Juneau-Butler refers to as “graduation visualization.” Advisors establish an anticipated graduation date and walk students through degree maps showing required classes and the optimal course rotations for a four- or five-year plan.

UNLV has worked to set the expectation that students complete at least 30 credits a year. The move is part of the “15 To Finish” campaign initiated by the Nevada System of Higher Education at all of its institutions. It is backed by national research that found students enrolled in at least 15 credits not only complete their degrees faster, they perform much better. That research also holds true at UNLV. Among the 2014 crop of freshmen, those taking fewer than 12 credits had a 2.51 GPA while those taking more than 15 credits earned a 2.94 GPA.

Students are getting the “15 to Finish” message loud and clear. The number of incoming freshmen taking 15 or more credits in fall 2014 was nearly double that of 2012.

BECOMING A REBEL

An academic induction ceremony called UNLV Creates is another recent addition to the freshman experience. At the event, students are presented with an honorary cord, the same one they can drape around their necks four years later at commencement. They hear top professors speak about their research experiences and life stories. And this year, keynote speaker Rehan Choudhry helped amp up excitement about college by giving away tickets to the Life Is Beautiful music festival he founded.

UNLV Creates emphasizes the difference between a true university experience and simply taking classes, Reiber asserts. “You’re now a part of a university with a research mission, and you have the opportunity to be immersed in that scholarship,” Reiber said. “For first-generation college students, this message is especially important. It can really shape their identity as Rebels.”

Research has certainly motivated Thomas. She works with a group at Tule Springs studying 30,000-year-old fossilized rodents to better understand their travel habits. “I’m on campus pretty much from about nine in the morning to eight at night,” she said. “It’s so much easier to get things done while I’m here. I can study, and if I have questions, I can jump to the tutoring center. I’m surrounded by people who understand what I’m doing.”

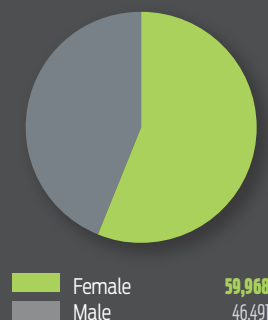
More: This story is part of a periodic series on how UNLV is reshaping the student experience and improving graduation rates. unlv.edu/news/studentsuccess

Graduates: A Little Bit About You

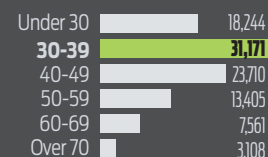
106,469

Total number of Rebels who’ve earned degrees from UNLV

Breakdown by gender



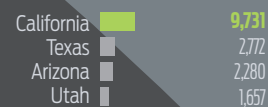
Breakdown by age



63,688

Number of UNLV graduates living in Nevada (61%)*

Where Else You Live



*More than 95% of those live in Clark County

20,259

Total number of graduates from the College of Education, the largest of any UNLV college

120,725

Total number of degrees granted by UNLV

Source:
UNLV Alumni Association, Oct. 19, 2015

They
are both
sociology
majors.

That's
Dakota

They're even competitive with their grades, Dakota says, "but that's a healthy competition. We push each other to do better."

"We started playing basketball probably around 3 or 4. Our mom (Angie Gonzalez, Kansas, 1982-84) played basketball. She got us going."

They're both listed as 6-foot-tall guards. Dakota looks taller in person. But Dylan says it's just the shoes.

Both talking quickly over each other. "We're very, very, very competitive with each other. It can get vicious, sometimes. But we consider ourselves this package deal. We're better together."

This is
Dylan

Dylan averaged 4.4 points over 30 games and four starts in her freshman year at Kansas. Dakota's season with the Jayhawks was limited by injuries,

Coming out of high school, both were ranked No. 85 nationally by Blue Star Basketball. In her prep career, Dakota set the school scoring record with 2,371 points. Dylan was a 2013 McDonald's All-American nominee.

A Package Deal

Find the singing duo's duets on YouTube under "Gonzo Fanpage."



@Dollbaby_duo
43,200 followers

Dakota:
"Our Twitter feed is conjoined."
Dakota does most of the tweeting while Dylan mostly keeps tabs on the conversations.

Dylan:
"We don't let our social media become a distraction, but I definitely think, on a positive note, it creates a buzz for the program."

THE GONZALEZ SISTERS — that's Dylan on the left; Dakota is on the right — found the spotlight long before they called Las Vegas home.

The twins, sophomore transfers from Kansas, are both Internet sensations. Together they have more than 1.5 million followers on Instagram, a lofty number for two 20-year-old college students who have yet to play a minute for the UNLV women's basketball team.

But they remain grounded: They're students first, Dakota says, and basketball players second.

So what do two young women from Pocatello, Idaho, think of their social media fame? And the Lady Rebels chances this season?

Oh, and those marriage proposals ...

PHOTOGRAPH BY R. MARSH STARKS

The Lady Rebels open the 2015-16 schedule at 3 p.m. Nov. 14 at home against Southern Utah.

Dylan:
"Sitting out a year made us much more hungry. We became students of the game."

Dakota:
"Heart and passion are two things [the Lady Rebels] really have — even if we aren't the tallest or fastest."

Yes, there have been a few online marriage proposals. One Kansas fan even sat in the stands holding up a sign promising nuptials.

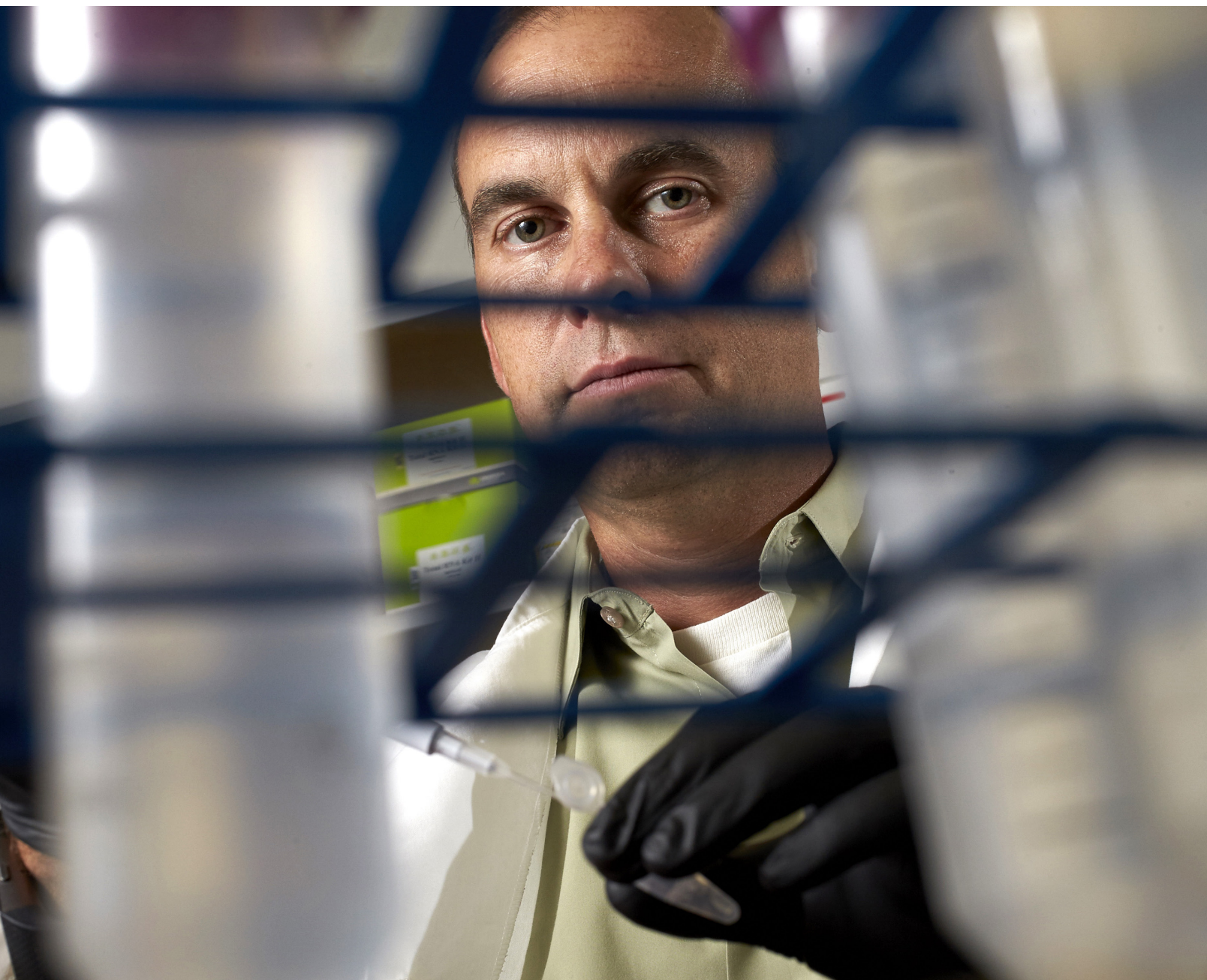
Dylan has 752,000 — but her account is private, so you'll need permission to follow her. Her profile says she's "black, German, and Native American and Hispanic."

Dakota has 786,000 followers on Instagram. She says her parents initially didn't know what to make of the twins' Internet celebrity.



Dakota: @miss_kota
Dylan: @miss_dyl

"It's still surprising when we get recognized," Dylan says. "We don't even view ourselves as celebrities." But clearly they are: "People have even cried before (when they saw us). It's crazy."



A New Twist

Researcher knew there was a connection between diabetes and Alzheimer's disease. Now they've discovered that a brief sickness could actually help.

BY BRIAN SODOMA

THE ISSUE

ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE is a debilitating disorder that affects millions of people. A number of risk factors have been identified for Alzheimer's disease; however, the role they play in the onset and progression of the disease is unclear. Two of the greatest risk factors are diabetes mellitus (specifically Type 2 diabetes) and chronic inflammation.

For the past two decades, researchers have effectively linked a higher likelihood of Alzheimer's disease with Type 2 diabetes. More recently, they've found that chronic inflammation in the brain is linked to the onset and acceleration of Alzheimer's disease. The mechanisms underlying how these two risk factors contribute to Alzheimer's disease are unclear.

UNLV, Tesla Collaboration

A partnership between UNLV and Tesla Motors will draw on the expertise of UNLV faculty in battery manufacturing. An engineering team will focus on water recycling and treatment while another team of chemists will work to improve recycling of metals from lithium ion batteries.

"This is an exciting example of how public-private partnerships can benefit both the commercial and academic communities," said President Len Jessup during an Oct. 7 event with Tesla and Nevada Gov. Brian Sandoval. "Our faculty are performing high-caliber research and are enthusiastic about collaborating with a leader in the electrical vehicle manufacturing industry."

Tesla's Northern Nevada Gigafactory is now under construction. The collaboration could total \$1 million in funded projects over the next five years.

Research With Muscle

A UNLV-led research team has received a \$3.8 million grant from the National Science Foundation to create artificial muscles. Soft robotics is an emerging field where the components of a robot are made of pliable materials. Engineering professor Kwang Kim and partners from UNLV, Korea, and Japan are developing new polymer-metal composites to improve the function and lower the cost of artificial muscles. Kim, a pioneer in the field, will work with UNLV engineering colleague and renowned robotics expert Paul Oh on the project.

To date, very few researchers have attempted to evaluate how Alzheimer's disease is affected when both of these risk factors are present — which occurs in a number of patients.

"In the clinic, a large number of patients have diabetes and chronic inflammatory states going on at the same time," said Jefferson Kinney, a UNLV neuroscience researcher and professor in the psychology department. "What we want to see is: If

animals were then evaluated for behavioral and pathological changes consistent with Alzheimer's disease.

RESULTS

THE TEAM ANTICIPATED the combined (fourth) group would exhibit the most severe disruptions; however, exactly the opposite occurred. Kinney's team found that learning deficits and the

NIH GRANT FURTHERS ALZHEIMER'S RESEARCH

Another one of Jefferson Kinney's projects is among those getting a big boost through an \$11.1 million grant to fund a Center of Biomedical Research Excellence (COBRE).

The Cleveland Clinic Lou Ruvo Center for Brain Health and UNLV were recently awarded the grant from the National Institutes of Health and National Institute of General Medical Sciences. The five-year award marks the first-ever COBRE grant in Southern Nevada.

"To be awarded such a competitive federal grant to tackle the medical mysteries behind such horrific diseases as Alzheimer's and Parkinson's is a testament to the caliber of the area's medical capabilities and collaborative efforts with UNLV," said Dr. Jeffrey Cummings, director of Ruvo Center and principal investigator for the grant.

In addition to Kinney's work to assess the role of the immune system in Alzheimer's disease progression, the grant funds projects led by Ruvo Center doctors. Dr. Ryan R. Walsh will use neuroimaging and neuropsychology to further understanding of Parkinson's. Dr. Sarah Banks will use neuropsychology and advanced imaging techniques to understand commonalities between Alzheimer's and Parkinson's.

UNLV's Supercomputing Center, directed by Joseph Lombardo, will provide database and statistical support.

the two risk factors were simultaneously present, would that accelerate Alzheimer's disease characteristics?"

Kinney's research team used animal models to seek answers. The results, recently published in the journal *Neuropharmacology*, were quite positive, but not at all what the group anticipated. The findings revealed a new path for future studies to explore.

METHODOLOGY

KINNEY'S ANIMAL MODEL included four groups of rodents. The first (control) group showed no behaviors or pathologies consistent with Alzheimer's disease. The second group was treated to disrupt insulin signaling in the brain, similar to Type 2 diabetes. This group exhibited both behavioral and pathological changes consistent with Alzheimer's disease, supporting the link between diabetes and Alzheimer's disease.

The third group was administered a compound to induce a brief activation of the immune system, akin to making them a little sick for a short time. The fourth group had both the insulin disruption and was given the same immune-activating agent as the third group, to combine the risk factors. All

Alzheimer's disease pathologies of the fourth group were less severe than the diabetes alone group.

"They did significantly better than the diabetic group," he said. "The symptoms were mild compared to controls." That brief sickness "rescued" some of the learning deficits and Alzheimer's pathology that the diabetic state had induced.

THE TAKE AWAY

THE STUDY FOUND that a brief activation of the immune system (inflammation) is actually a way to fight off deficits associated with Alzheimer's disease. However, as is the case with chronic brain inflammation in the human body, when that immune response extends for a longer period of time, it reverses gains and fuels further neurological decline.

But Kinney said the results have motivated his team to continue down this research trail. Follow-up studies will look more closely at what length of time immune activation starts to become a problem and what mechanisms are responsible for both the improvement and eventual worsening of Alzheimer's pathology.

"This caught some fire for us. There are a lot of directions we can go from here," he added.

In high school, Carolyn Yucha (that's "yoo-ha") was an aid in a women's unit at a state mental hospital. Some of the patients, she would later figure out, were not ill. They were old. They had dementia or Alzheimer's. And some of their behaviors came from anti-psychotic medications they didn't need. One day she brought in puzzles and was thrilled to see some patients walk over and start doing them — they engaged. "I went off to college thinking I was going to change the face of psychiatric care. When I was introduced to cancer care and critical care nursing, I thought I'd change that too." Many things in nursing have changed, she said, and some things are still left to do.

AS NOT SEEN ON TV

Carolyn Yucha, dean of the School of Nursing and School of Allied Health Sciences

One of my early positions in a cancer research hospital got me hooked on research and I returned for my MS in Nursing. When I got pregnant, I started teaching part-time. I realized that I was able to provide the right mixture of education and entertainment to keep students engaged. This should not have surprised me because nurses are teachers at their core.

TV shows can drive me crazy. On an episode of *CSI*, a nurse leaves the room as soon as the investigator comes to see a brain trauma patient. Then it's as if he discovered this yes-no-blink thing. Good grief. Every nurse is able to figure out a way to communicate with patients who can't talk — it's such a basic skill. It would have been much more realistic if the nurse had stayed to help the investigator.

But nurses don't do themselves any favors. Physical therapy requires a doctorate, but you can become an R.N. with just an associate's degree. We've been talking about the need for higher levels of education for the credential since the 1970s.

It can be tough to convince a student — especially our first-generation students who want to

start contributing to their families right away — that they should put in the time for a bachelor's. But that higher degree will take them so much further.

Associate's programs do a great job teaching all the technical tasks of patient care. But the bachelor's starts with solid general education that we build on to develop problem-solving within the profession.

Frankly, if it takes a couple sticks to get an IV in my arm, that's less important to me than a nurse who recognizes that my confusion might be related to the mix of medications I'm on.

Academia has always had a problem with educating students in silos and then sending them out to a world that expects them to work as a team.

I once had a job where if you made a medical error you got written up. It was supposed to teach you to not make mistakes; instead it taught people to never admit them. And it divided nurses and physicians.

We built the Clinical Simulation Center with Nevada State College so we could run scenarios right alongside medical

residents from the University of Nevada (based in Reno). That interprofessional education is so critical. The center allows future nurses and physicians to practice together, to focus on recognizing and fixing their mistakes.

I hope the education UNLV offers in the health professions is enhanced at all levels as our own School of Medicine gets off the ground. When you're starting from the beginning, you don't have to undo decades of entrenchment to infuse a curriculum with a new approach, with that team approach.

My biggest challenge is finding faculty. There are so few here in Nevada with advanced degrees. Mid-career faculty with kids — it's tough to get them to uproot for Las Vegas. In Boston when they want to make the next career jump, all they have to do is commute less than an hour the other way to a new campus.

During the recession, I lost five senior faculty to buyouts. It was great for them and saved some budget, but ouch for the rest of the School of Nursing. We hired some fantastic assistant professors but it takes time for them to become productive. I go to bed every night worried

that some other dean is going to steal them away.

We've created graduate programs to fill the need for faculty and really to influence the profession well beyond Las Vegas. Program-building takes years. It can be hard to recognize progress. So it was huge when U.S. News ranked us in the top 10 for online graduate programs in nursing education and in family nurse practitioners.

I am frustrated that we still face this second-class status to physicians. I was appalled when a hospital in town developed its board and didn't put a single nurse on it. That's old-school thinking. Nurses make up 50 percent of hospital staff — you can bet they'd have some special insights to offer all those business leaders on the board.

In truth, though, this is a great job. Our students are snapped up and local employers report that they transition so well into their first jobs. Our faculty are growing as teachers and winning National Institutes of Health-level grants. We're needed. So I can't worry too much about the fact that nursing sometimes seems overlooked. That is nursing in a nutshell.



Do you
think smart
people will
want to
become
nurses if
all they
see is us
standing in
the back-
ground
saying,
“Yes, Dr.
House”?

Paint it ... Scarlet!

UNLV football's 23-17 victory Oct. 3 over UNR brought the campus more than bragging rights. The winner of the rivalry game also gets to keep one of college football's greatest trophies, the Fremont Cannon, and paint it in the school's colors.

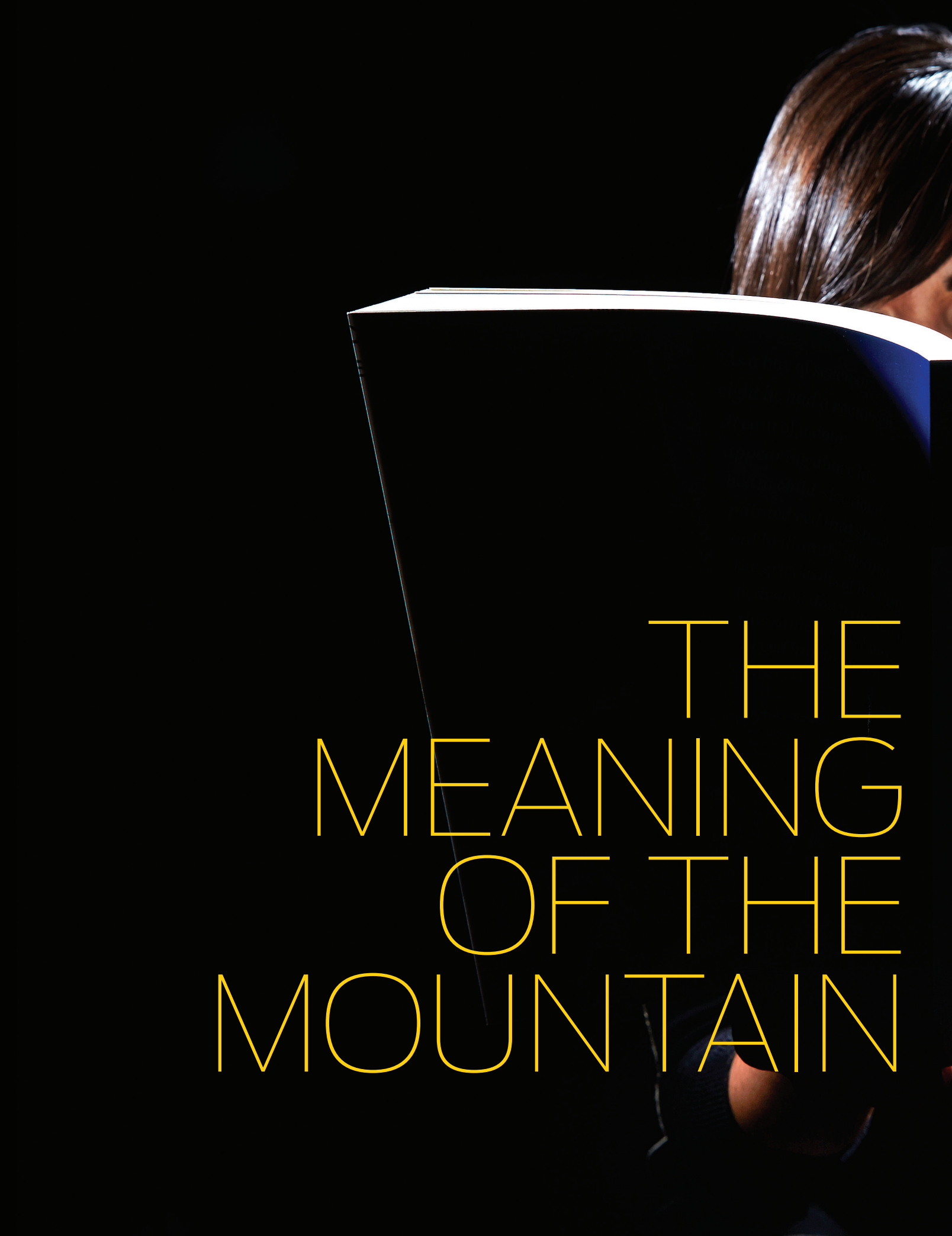
(Right) The team celebrated the victory around the cannon in the locker room at UNR's Mackay Stadium.

(Below, from top) Keith Whitley rushed for 76 yards on 16 carries. After a parade across campus the Monday after the game, head coach Tony Sanchez splashed the first bit of paint on the cannon. The UNLV paint shop then took over to prepare the trophy for the next game.

[Game photos: Aaron Mayes. Paint photos: R. Marsh Starks]





A person with long dark hair is seen from the back, holding an open book. The scene is dimly lit, with the light from the book's pages illuminating the person's hair and the edges of the book. The background is black.

THE MEANING OF THE MOUNTAIN

NEARLY 10 YEARS AFTER THE FOUNDING of UNLV's Black Mountain Institute, it's still a fair question to ask: What exactly is the Black Mountain Institute? The question is spurred not by a lack of mission, but by BMI's multiplicity of missions. For aspiring creative writers, the now-named Beverly Rogers, Carol C. Harter Black Mountain Institute is a source of vital support for graduate studies at UNLV. For established authors, it is home to some of the nation's most sought-after fellowships, allowing them the time and space to complete their projects. To international writers endangered in their home countries, it is a City of Asylum — a place to come and create without death threats and censorship. To literary-minded Southern Nevadans, it is a producer of provocative panels that scrutinize everything from the magic of jazz to the moral quandaries of modern medicine. To the casual reader of headlines, it's the place that over the past three years has inspired donations

UNLV's Black Mountain Institute heads into its second decade: A roundtable discussion on mission, money, and dreams in the Republic of Letters. BY GREG BLAKE MILLER | PHOTOS BY AARON MAYES

and pledges of more than \$35 million.

But when those out-of-town guests come and smirk and ask you about high culture in Vegas, how do you encapsulate BMI in a single elevator pitch?

"One of our core purposes," says Joshua Wolf Shenk, the renowned author who has just begun his work as BMI's executive director, "is to be a source of positive attention for UNLV as a hotbed of intellectual, literary, and artistic activity."

But Shenk, like his predecessor, BMI founder and former UNLV President Carol C. Harter, knows it's more than that: Black Mountain, he says, is a portal, an organic network of relationships that ground our ever-changing city in an ageless literary tradition. It is an aspiration, a longing, a focal point for a community's evolving efforts to find its place in the cultural cosmos. And most of all — as a new team including Shenk, artistic director Maile Chapman, and director of literary nonfiction Sally Denton settles into pristine offices in the Beverly Rogers Literature and Law Building — BMI is a field of possibility, the sum of the dreams of the people who work there.

This is a conversation about those dreams.



LITERATURE AND THE ART OF OPEN EYES

Chapman: I periodically reread a book, *Wired for Story* by Lisa Cron. It's a neuroscientific look at why the brain is drawn to literature, to story, to narrative. The idea is that evolutionarily, stories have been our only way of finding out how to survive in a circumstance, literally or metaphorically, that we haven't encountered — and maybe never will. Why would we take the time to become so engrossed in a story? There must be a benefit — and the benefit is that we learn about the world, and we learn about empathy, and we learn what's possible, and we learn what kind of people we are by weighing what we might do in similar circumstances.

Shenk: Literature has this unusual ability to create connection and understanding and whatever the opposite of loneliness is. The irony is that it's often created alone and received alone, but it creates this crackle of energy for those of us on either side of the divide to meet each other. And people who have that experience, they often want to be together, physically. BMI is that meeting place. We create experiences where readers and writers can sense the energy that is very often living in quieter places.

Chapman: That's one of the reasons our events include writers from different backgrounds and different perspectives, people who sometimes don't agree with each other.

Harter: From the time we started [in 2006], we knew that it was important to establish with the community that literature and the study of literature are worthy activities. We created these events and

The Participants



Carol C. Harter, BMI founder and executive director, 2006-2015; president of UNLV, 1995-2006. Harter is now the chair of the BMI Advisory Board. She is the co-author of two books, *John Irving* and *E.L. Doctorow*, and has published numerous articles on literary topics and higher education issues.



Joshua Wolf Shenk, executive director and writer-in-residence of the Black Mountain Institute and author of *Lincoln's Melancholy* and *Powers of Two: How Relationships Drive Creativity*. For an extended conversation about his background, visit unlv.edu/news/bmi.



Maile Chapman, '10 PhD Creative Writing, BMI artistic director, assistant professor of English, and author of the novel *Your Presence Is Requested at Suvanto*. She is the former facilitator for the literature and medicine program at University Medical Center. She's also the Alumna of the Year for the College of Liberal Arts, page 36.



Sally Denton, BMI director of literary non-fiction and community relations. Denton, an investigative reporter and Nevada native, is the author of eight nonfiction books including *The Money and the Power: The Making of Las Vegas*, *American Massacre: The Tragedy at Mountain Meadows*, and the forthcoming *The Profiteers: Bechtel and the Men Who Built the World*.

➔ **Web Extras:** BMI co-founder and globetrotting author Richard Wiley discusses the gift of international perspective and his plans for a future novel in "We Wanted to Push Our Students Into the Larger World" • Carol C. Harter shares an oral history of the birth of BMI in "There Was a Kind of Wonderful Destiny to It." • And we offer up a recommended reading list of UNLV authors. unlv.edu/news/bmi

made them free and open to everyone. And we brought in writers people would recognize and asked them to talk about subjects that were really important. Sometimes they were political, sometimes they were historical, sometimes they were aesthetic.

Chapman: The conversation always goes into places you don't expect it to go. A good example was the first Jim Rogers Contrarian Lecture with Walter Mosley this last spring. The topic was higher education, but he spoke to a large extent about race — and it was fascinating. I haven't spoken to anyone who had a neutral reaction to that. He really woke people up in their seats.

Harter: When we did the “Was Jesus Married?” panel in 2014, the Beam Music Center was packed — there were two rows of people sitting on the floor, up and down the aisles, outside. We had, thankfully, a TV outside, because everybody wanted to hear it. And at our 2008 panel on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, I wound up playing this policewoman — because *It Was Hot*. But I think it's good to get some creative friction.

Chapman: When things matter, feelings run high. You can't have significance without emotional involvement. Forging a new way of looking at something can be uncomfortable. But when we study literature — and when we listen to the writers at our events — it helps us not only to see what's going on in the world, but also in many cases to enjoy what's going on. I think of it as the *So You Think You Can Dance* effect. I watch something and I think, “Wow, that was an amazing waltz.” Then I hear the judges say, “Well, this was working, this wasn't.” Without my thought being guided a bit, I wouldn't have recognized those nuances. We're trying to offer people things that allow them to use their critical thinking faculties — we don't get that all the time in everyday life.

Shenk: Literature is about emotional realities, it's about vulnerability, it's about yearning, it's about heartbreak. Maile and I were reflecting today on the potency of our Emerging Writers Series. The MFA and PhD students select four writers a year to speak here, and it's very telling that they're catching people just before they

become national sensations. It's like an early-warning system. If you want to know what books will be featured in the *New York Times Book Review* podcast, that's one thing. But I'd rather know what books are keeping a 24-year-old writer awake all night. These students aren't thinking about the writer's reputation; they're thinking about the sentences that make it feel like there's superglue in their eyelids, that feeling of being so wide-eyed that you see the world in a totally new way.

Harter: Of course, not every panel has been as successful as we had wished. We had one case where everybody, including the moderator, had had too much to drink at the reception. I was in the front row, and I thought, “I'm going to die. I'm going to jump up on that stage and take over!”

THE CHANGING OF THE GUARD

Harter: Literature is where I started out, so after 11 years as president at UNLV, coming back to my academic roots in 2005 to start the Black Mountain Institute was like returning home. Now, after I've worked for 51 years, I finally said, “It's time.” It's not easy to let go; when you retreat from something you love, it's always a little painful. But I think this enterprise needs a constant infusion of younger people with new voices who see the world differently. When we were searching for my successor, I tried not to have a preconceived notion of who that person might be. Josh won out in his willingness, in front of a very large search committee, to think out loud and not to have a bunch of canned answers. He was so open to what could happen here that we felt that this is a person who's going to have more ideas than we could possibly deal with — and that's what's so good. He's like a lightning bug in a bottle.

Denton: When we hired Josh, all of a sudden my agent and editor and everybody in New York were like, “So what is that Black Mountain that you work for?” As Black Mountain becomes better known, people

who want to go into a writing program are going to ask themselves, “Where do I want to be? Let me see: Iowa? Vegas?” You know, that's going to be kind of a no-brainer.

Chapman: All of the things that Carol and [cofounder and former BMI literary director] Richard Wiley have worked on are bearing fruit.

Denton: And the expansion of the literary nonfiction program through the English department [in the next few years] is really important to our growth. Any serious writer in America today, even if their passion is fiction, is going to have to write nonfiction if they want to make a living.

Shenk: If I was coming out of college today, I would almost certainly get an MFA in literary nonfiction. When I was graduating, I think there was one program in the country that offered an MFA in nonfiction. It was not part of the culture for nonfiction writers at all. And that has radically changed.

THE GIFT

Denton: BMI has always been this insular jewel that nobody quite understands. But Beverly Rogers' unbelievable \$30 million pledge really has kind of catapulted us into the public eye.

Shenk: Beverly Rogers ['77 BA History and '06 MA English] is coming from an ideal place: She wants to sustain, develop, and encourage the literary arts; she believes in BMI as a vehicle for that, and she's entirely supportive without an egoistic agenda. If you were to survey directors of literary nonprofits and say, “OK, hypothetical: Someone comes to you with a \$30 million gift,” people would be excited, for sure, but they'd also be wary. They would assume that the donor's whims would suddenly dictate the agenda. But we have a very unusual donor.



**“At its heart,
BMI is a por-
tal — it’s wel-
coming the
wider world
into UNLV,
and it is ex-
posing what
happens at
UNLV to the
wider world.”**

— Joshua Shenk

without purpose. There is a role for the writer in the culture.

Harter: There’s a pent-up cultural demand in Las Vegas among intellectuals, businesspeople, lawyers. Folks want to avail themselves of these kinds of high-level conversations. They want to meet these writers and thinkers and listen to their viewpoints. We’ve been drawing different audiences, too, and that’s really important. When we did our jazz panel in 2011, probably half the audience was African-American. And when we did our medical ethics panel in 2012, we had two guys come in scrubs. I mean, they literally came off the operating room floor to hear the panel.

Chapman: If I could wave my magic wand and make it happen right now, I would like to be connected to the [Veterans Administration hospital], and in the future I’d like to be connected to the medical school UNLV is now creating. Humanities reading and discussion groups for doctors, patients, and veterans have real, measurable benefits. In my hometown, Tacoma, Washington, there’s a creative writing program at the hospital for kids who are patients or whose parents are patients and are gravely ill. That’s not an ivory tower pursuit. That’s the kind of benefit we can provide to the city.

Denton: I’m a fourth-generation Nevadan, born in Elko and raised

in Boulder City, and I’d like to see us do more outreach to Nevada writers. I think there’s always been this kind of inferiority complex among native Nevadans: “If it’s here — if it’s ours — it’s probably no good.” And that’s really something to overcome.

**BLACK
MOUNTAIN
AND THE WORLD**

Shenk: At my core, I’m an optimist for the enduring values of connection, of moral instruction, of entertaining the possibility of transcendence. In any age, there are overwhelming forces against these core values. In any age, it seems that they will be, could be, any day now, crushed and annihilated. And yet they persist and endure. There’s often a paradox at play that the more these values are threatened, the stronger they assert themselves.

Chapman: UNLV established the first City of Asylum in North America. That goes back to 2001, even before BMI was born. We bring writers here who are imperiled in their home countries, and we give them a \$60,000 fellowship and housing. Right now, Hossein Abkenar, an Iranian writer renowned for the film *No One Knows About Persian Cats*, is here with his son — and he can’t go back. Last year, we tried very hard to help a writer out of Syria. [BMI Assistant Director] Joe Langdon corresponded with

**1.
PROVOKING
DISCUSSION**

Its events and fellowships for established writers bring top thinkers here to focus on issues that reveal timely and timeless truths. Past guests include Michael Chabon (top), Toni Morrison (bottom left, photo by Geri Kodey), Joyce Carol Oates, Cheryl Strayed (bottom center), Henry Louis Gates, Jr., Wole Soyinka, and many more.

The Jim Rogers Contrarian Lecture, in particular, courts controversy to expand conversation. It features a person with provocative or dissenting views on a topic. The inaugural event featured novelist Walter Mosley (bottom right).

Denton: There aren’t a lot of people who just generously and genuinely give their money to something and say, “You guys know what you’re doing, do it, do it right.” That’s so rare. It’s so authentic.

Chapman: We still can’t do everything, and we still very much need to cement our existence in other ways. This gift doesn’t solve every problem. Actually, it creates a bunch of really wonderful new problems.

Harter: This is not the end. Beverly built upon the more than \$4 million we raised before her first \$10 million pledge. And that led to another \$1 million from another donor. She wants to leverage the money to get other people involved. She wants people to say, “I want to be in that club, too!”

Shenk: The donation puts us in a potent situation. It’s venture capital that allows us to create programs that really demonstrate their promise and that generate sustaining support.

**THE INSTITUTE,
THE CITY
AND THE FUTURE**

Shenk: I want us to be anchored in the literary arts, in storytelling that’s compelling and maybe shocking, and ultimately transformative for both the person creating it and the person experiencing it. I also want us to work in a way that recognizes that we’re alive on this planet at a time when there are real needs: We’re not just closing our eyes and pretending we’re floating about the world

JUST WHAT DOES BMI DO?

The Black Mountain Institute's list of things — public programs, innovative collaborations, publications, fellowships — is long, but it all comes down to stimulating literary culture in Las Vegas and around the world in two key ways.



COMING
SOON

This Piece Saved My Life: Original talks by writers on works of art that had such a seminal impact on their vision that they'd call them "life-saving."

The Believer @ BMI: A multimedia festival in collaboration with *The Believer*, a leading literary magazine and part of the McSweeney's publishing group.

Vet Lit: A colloquy focusing on the creative writing of military veterans and the programs to facilitate literary education in their community.

him extensively, but he just couldn't get over the border. Joe has the last email, and we have no idea what has happened. That was really awful.

Denton: I made it my personal mission to find out what happened, and then I got a clear message from the State Department: Stop asking. The international authors who come here are seriously under threat. This isn't just like, "I'm writing poetry and it ticked somebody off." It's really important to understand that this is still going on in the world, and for us to do something about it. But what happens is after they're here a year or two, there's often no place for them to go next, so we'd really like to find more money to keep them.

Shenk: I pitched PEN Center USA in Los Angeles, where I'm a board member, an idea for them to come on as a cosponsor and to integrate our City of Asylum fellows into the literary life of Los Angeles. It's the nearest big literary city, a place with a lot of ethnic communities that would respond to our City of Asylum writers. The idea is that we go to PEN's base of support and look for help sustaining the program in the future. But we get to drive that process, because we're already running the program, and we've shown its power.

Denton: When you come here as a fellow — whether for City of Asylum or for an ordinary fellowship, which is what originally brought me back to Las Vegas — BMI provides you with everything that you need to do your

work, and they take it very seriously. For me as a writer, being at BMI has been the most remarkable experience of anyplace I've ever been. I've had a Guggenheim Fellowship, and I've been at the Woodrow Wilson Center. But there's nothing like this place for collegial support.

Shenk: We're here to serve the community, and that's a big reason they insisted on having a resident director. This job was appealing to a lot of people who wanted to spend a couple of days a week here, and that was a nonstarter. I'm here and committed to engaging the community and also

connecting it with New York, Los Angeles, Berlin. At its heart, BMI is a portal — it's welcoming the wider world into UNLV, and it is exposing what happens at UNLV to the wider world.

Denton: I feel like I'm in on the ground floor of something that's just about to explode into something really wonderful, and my affection is that it's in Nevada. You know, I wouldn't be hanging around a literary institute in Iowa. My great hope is to enhance literature in the state of Nevada. If I were

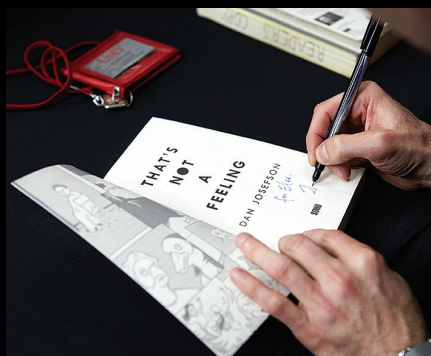
to write a national piece, I wouldn't do the obvious lead: "Who thought it would be in Vegas?" Instead, I'd write a whole piece about this unbelievable literary institute in the desert and talk about the landscape and the caliber of writing and all of that, and then the last line: "By the way, it's in Las Vegas."

Greg Blake Miller is the director of Olympian Creative Education and the author of the short-story collection Decemberlands.

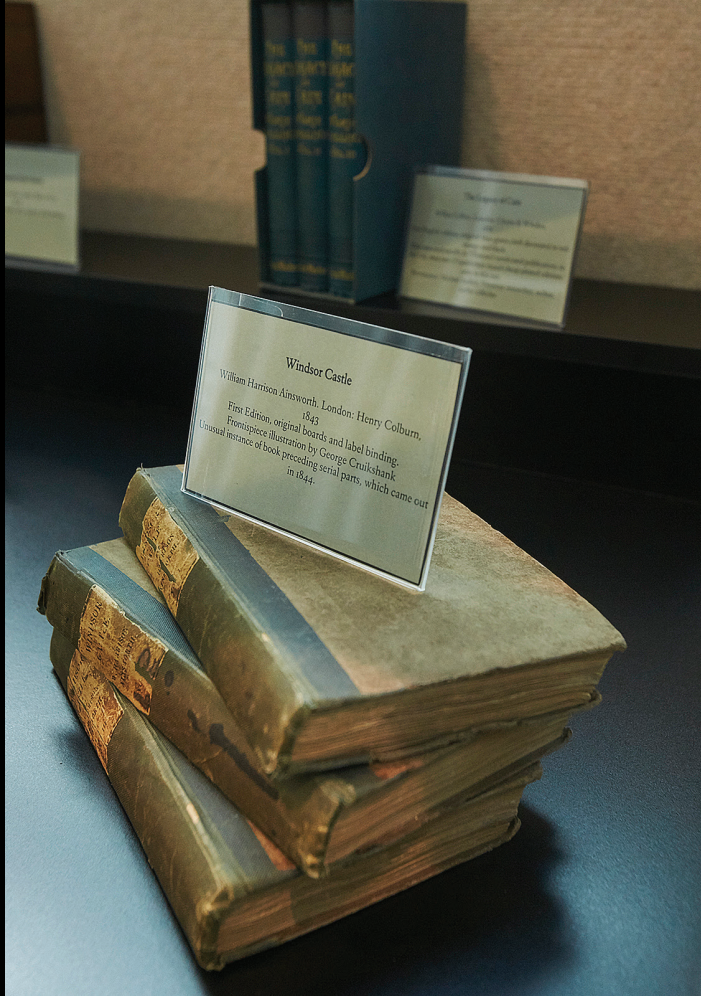
2. NURTURING WRITERS

Graduate students receive support via BMI's fellowships and travel grants, as well as experience editing *Witness*, which blends the features of a literary and an issue-oriented magazine to draw out modern writers as witnesses to their times. In addition, UNLV students also curate the BMI's Emerging Writers Series, which brings early-career writers from elsewhere to UNLV and UNR for public readings and craft talks.

JUST WHAT DOES BMI DO?



Clockwise from top left: **Leia Penina Wilson**, current BMI PhD fellow, author of *i built a boat with all the towels in your closet (and will let you drown)*; **Vu Tran**, '06 PhD English and a BMI Schaffer Fellow, an assistant professor at the University of Chicago, author of *Dragonfish*. **David Armstrong**, a 2014 BMI PhD Fellow, an assistant professor at the University of the Incarnate Word and author of the short story collection *Going Anywhere*; **Olivia Clare**, current PhD Fellow and author of the book of poetry *The 26-Hour Day*; **Dan Josefson**, '04 MFA in Creative Writing, signing his novel *That's Not A Feeling*; and **Joshua Kryah**, '06 PhD and BMI Schaffer Fellow, author of *We Are Starved*.



COLLECTING BOOKS IN THE MODERN WORLD

BY CATE WEEKS

A BIBLIOPHILE CAN EASILY WAX POETIC about her love of tangible pages, crafted covers, and that comforting aroma of ink and paper, but in today's age of iPads and audiobooks, is collecting physical books anachronistic?

That's a fair question, especially amidst all the redline remainders at big-box stores, said Beverly Rogers, '77 BA History, '06 MA English. "But I don't think book collecting is going away anytime soon, not after this many thousands of years. There's a huge contingent worldwide of people who understand that the book is a historical artifact just as a dinosaur bone is a scientific artifact."

Rogers is a namesake of the Beverly Rogers, Carol C. Harter Black Mountain Institute (BMI) and of the recently remodeled building that houses the literary center, the English department and the Honors College. She has bequeathed her 1,200-volume collection of rare books to BMI.

"I started collecting in 1997 when Jim and I got married," she said, referring to her late husband, Jim Rogers, a former chancellor of the Nevada System of Higher Education and supporter of UNLV. "We were doing a lot of traveling and I found this memoir in an airport (*Used & Rare: Travels in the Book World*) about a couple who were simply trying



"From the title page to the fonts to the printing to the binding — I love the minutiae of it. I love the fact that these things are being saved from obscurity."

— Beverly Rogers



Beverly Rogers and Joseph Langdon, assistant director of the Black Mountain Institute, during the installation of an exhibit of books on Victorian publishing.

to find unique gifts for each other. They were new to collecting, and they weren't rich. They showed me that anyone can become a collector."

While her own collections include authors she loves — Joseph Conrad, George Eliot, John Steinbeck — she also collects to preserve, document, and study publishing industry practices, particularly of the Victorian era. So alongside the leather-clad first editions are examples of the bound magazines that first published Sir Arthur Conan Doyle and novels that would be delivered "in parts" through a 19-month subscription. She also collects "the works" of Thomas J. Wise, a 19th century bibliophile and creative forger.

"The material object can tell us so much," she said. "From the title page to the fonts to the printing to the binding — I love the minutiae of it. I love the fact that these things are being saved from obscurity."

This leads to her advice for novice collectors: Collect books you love. Talk to booksellers — they're quite honest and helpful individuals — and find a purpose or direction, but don't be afraid to make mistakes as you develop your collection's focus. "The point is just to start."

More: The Victorian Publishing Practices exhibit is on display in the BMI reading room for faculty and students.

UNLV
Alumni
of the
Year

**OUR TOP GRADS
TELL US ABOUT**

A MOMENT OF DOUBT

AND WHAT THEY LEARNED

*As told to Brian Sodoma
and Cate Weeks*

Every year, the UNLV Alumni Association honors Rebels who stand out because of their impressive accomplishments — and this year's crop certainly doesn't disappoint.

They've climbed to the top of corporate ladders. Tackled problems in their communities. And garnered international awards.

But sometimes, just as with all of us, their biggest life lessons have come from times they felt a little clueless.



**Kris
Engelstad
McGarry**

'92 BA PSYCHOLOGY,
'95 BSW SOCIAL WORK

ALUMNA OF THE YEAR

... FACING CANCER AND CORPORATE LAWYERS

KNOW EXACTLY MY MOST CLUELESS MOMENT: Five years ago, after my dad had died, we decided to sell our casino property in Mississippi to Boyd Gaming. I had to walk into a room with about 15 of their lawyers for the negotiations. I'm always conscious that, still, there are certain perceptions because I'm female and because I'm the owner's daughter.

In the midst of all this, I was going through chemotherapy for breast cancer. I was very aware of how I looked. I didn't want to look weak. And I certainly didn't want the lawyers circling me. I felt like they'd eat me alive.

I think you deal with not being taken on your own merits by building up an unshakable confidence. So I was really particular about how I covered my head and masked what was going on with my chest. And then I reminded myself that I grew up in the casino. That I had worked every position at some point before I ever became a manager. I knew I knew my business.

When it was all done, I remember thinking, *I just sold a casino!* I went home, told my husband, put on my sweatpants, and had a glass of wine. It really was simple. And, I'm proud to say, we got a \$10 million donation to my family's foundation out of the deal.

Engelstad McGarry has made well over \$100 million in contributions to UNLV and the Las Vegas community through the Engelstad Family Foundation. The foundation recently donated 100 full, four-year scholarships to the UNLV medical school. In 2009, the foundation also created the Engelstad Scholars program, the largest scholarship program in Nevada, which supports 100 UNLV students each year based on their community service, academic excellence, leadership, and financial need.

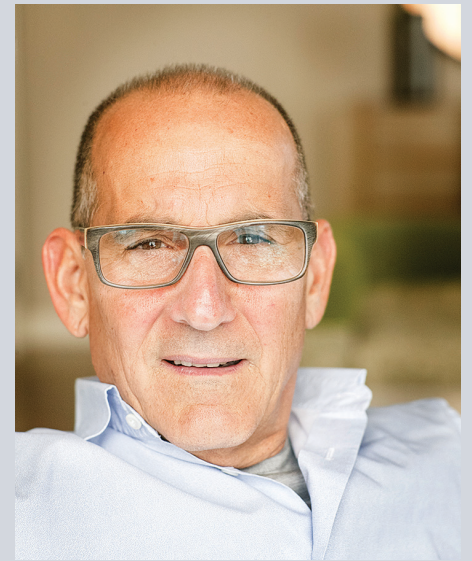
... ON THE FLOOR OF THE NEW YORK STOCK EXCHANGE

Michael PeQueen had graduated from UNLV just months earlier and was hired as a financial advisor by a national investment firm. The training included spending a day on the floor of the exchange, shadowing a team member to learn the ins and outs of the system. It was total chaos. At least it appeared that way to me.

Once the trader I was assigned to learned I was from Las Vegas his face lit up and he said, "Then you're gonna feel right at home here." He felt the fast pace and movement of large sums of capital were something both places had in common. For the rest of the day, he helped me understand the intricacies and amazing history of the New York Stock Exchange. I quickly learned there was a clear system behind the chaotic sight of traders running, pushing, squeezing, and shouting past colleagues to execute orders for huge blocks of stock.

Michael PeQueen

'88 BS FINANCE
LEE BUSINESS SCHOOL



... at the right time

John Ceriale went to work for Marriott Hotels in 1979. After a few years they started syndicating properties, and I was quickly promoted many times, eventually becoming the youngest general manager. Not to say that I didn't deserve it, but in a different time, even if you deserved a promotion you wouldn't have gotten it — there was a very strict hierarchy. I happened to be at the right place at the right time when things changed.

That said, I stayed on a really tight path. If you have self-discipline and you stay focused on the task at hand — not the next task, not the last task — and you're lucky enough to be born with a fairly good brain and a good social IQ, I think you can be very successful whenever you're facing something brand new.

Ceriale is founder and president of Prospect Advisors, a hospitality consultant to the Blackstone Group. He played a key role in Blackstone's acquisition of Wyndham Hotels & Resorts, Boca Resorts Inc., The Savoy, The Berkeley, and others. Previously, he served as senior vice president of operations for Westin Hotels and Resorts.

... DURING MY FIRST BIG INTERVIEW

I was quite excited to get a call from a company that was manufacturing computer enclosures. We started with a plant tour where they discussed their ambitions to automate. This sounded perfect and interesting. I asked many questions and then I finally asked, "Well, who would I be working for?" I was a bit shocked to learn I would be a one-man department. I had a deer-in-the-headlights look.

There was no call back. Since then, I have learned that engineers are hired sparingly and often have to stretch beyond their current knowledge base to complete projects. Now I'm willing to plow into new skill sets while asking as many stupid questions as I can before it all gets too real.

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Colton is a research engineer for American Pacific Corp.'s Halotron Division in Las Vegas. He has published several research articles related to fire extinguishing agents and holds two patents. He is currently the director of the Silver State section of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers and a member of the UNLV Mechanical Engineering Advisory Board.



Bradford Colton
'94 BS MECHANICAL
ENGINEERING
HOWARD R. HUGHES
COLLEGE OF
ENGINEERING

... as a new manager with no training

When I first became manager 20 years ago, (my director) basically told me there was no time for orientation and she would give me a "resource book" to help. As a novice, I didn't know what I didn't know. I stumbled at times when I had to handle employee issues or deal with difficult colleagues. I barely knew how to use the computer.

It took me a while to figure it all out, and I think I would have been better off had someone mentored me or given guidance on how best to educate myself on the demands of the role. Perhaps then I wouldn't have sat in my office so much trying to figure out what to do next!

.....

Covelli was a member of the school's inaugural doctor of nursing practice cohort and today is the chief nursing officer at Spring Valley Hospital. She was appointed to the Nevada State Board of Nursing's Education Advisory Committee and is a past winner of the Distinguished Nurse of the Year honor from the Southern Nevada March of Dimes.



Margaret E. Covelli
'12 PhD NURSING
SCHOOL OF
NURSING



Matt Engle
'91 BS BUSINESS
ADMINISTRATION
ACHIEVEMENT IN
SERVICE AWARD

... and unprepared to answer questions

After more than 15 years of climbing the corporate ladder, I started building my own book of business as a commercial insurance broker. With all those years

of overseeing huge revenue-generating divisions and having people report to me, I thought I was well prepared.

Early on, I lost a sizeable account, which put me in a pretty vulnerable financial position. This account was with a company owner I had known for some time. One day he brought in a new CFO who asked a lot of questions that, quite honestly, tripped me up. I didn't instill the confidence he was looking for. It was a difficult experience for someone who'd already climbed a high corporate mountain. But experience really is the best teacher. Were it not for that mistake, I wouldn't be able to so easily anticipate and respond to client questions and concerns today. While I prefer not to remember that humbling situation, it's one that helped me be successful now.

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Engle is an insurance professional with Cragin & Pike, one of the oldest insurance companies in Las Vegas. He has continually served his alma mater and the association since graduating. As president of the Alumni Association from 2010 to 2012, he helped boost membership and create synergy

between the association and university for recruitment efforts. He helped raise tens of thousands of dollars through personal donations and corporate sponsorships and by chairing the association's silent auction committee. He also helped promote higher education funding during the 2010 Nevada legislative session.

... when I had to put out a fake fire

In my first year of teaching, before the start of winter break, I was helping my classroom of 25 excited 6-year-olds create a chain of red and green holiday decorations. Glue and glitter were flying everywhere, and it was the worst possible time to hear: "There's a fire in your room."

Those words came from one big, burly fireman that liked to pick on new teachers while making his rounds for monthly fire drills. Every procedure I knew quickly flew out of my head as the students started to ask, "There's a fire?" I dropped the chain link decoration on a student's head and replied, "There isn't a fire in here."

The fireman stared through me, reiterating, "There's a fire," motioning toward the fire alarm. I finally got the hint. The kids followed rather chaotically, and I think we failed the drill that month, but it was a learning experience.

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Barton is currently chief student advisement officer for the Clark County School District and previously served as associate superintendent for the Instruction Unit and the academic manager for the district's Performance Zone 8. He has worked as a teacher, teacher development facilitator, principal, and dean.



William R. "Mike" Barton
'00 MED & '06 EDD
EDUCATIONAL
LEADERSHIP
COLLEGE OF
EDUCATION

**Danielle
Kelly**

'07 MFA ART
COLLEGE OF
FINE ARTS



... STARING AT A GIGANTIC BLANK CANVAS

In the summer of 2011 the Neon Museum began the terrific task of creating the Neon Boneyard exhibition. I was in charge of curating the collection and given the tall task of executing the grand exhibition plan for over 80 of the more than 150 signs in the collection. What if all of the people who loved the signs and the museum were disappointed? What if the sign crews didn't take me seriously? What if I failed Las Vegas and its luminous visual history?

I put on my hard hat and stepped to the middle of the massive empty lot that would someday be the Neon Boneyard. It was a blank canvas, engulfing us all, and that first massive sign was swinging ever so slightly in the breeze. There's nothing like coming face to face with a 2-ton sign suspended in the air a mere foot away to render you speechless. Channeling my inner 5-year-old, I dug in my heels to play in the dirt.

As executive director of Las Vegas' Neon Museum, Kelly helped the museum transition from a small grassroots entity with 500 monthly visitors to one that hosts more than 5,500 visitors per month. A sculpture and performance-based artist, she recently relocated with her family to New Mexico. She is still serving as interim director of the Neon Museum until her replacement is hired.

Maile Chapman

'10 PhD ENGLISH
COLLEGE OF
LIBERAL ARTS

... when I became my mother's caretaker

My mother faces early-onset dementia with good humor and grace. I help with medical appointments, prescriptions, exercise, eyeglasses, insurance, safety, clothing, hospital stays, caring for her cat, and, hopefully, making sure she's as happy as possible.

Frankly, the responsibility is often overwhelming. Alzheimer's disease is a vortex pulling in those who have it but also their caregivers and family members, undermining and even destroying relationships, careers, physical health, financial stability, emotional wellbeing, and more.

I cringe at describing her illness as a hardship for me — because it is her suffering that matters most — but I'm compelled to share these details so that I can also say, as often as possible and with the voice of hard-won experience: find a caregiver support group. Even if you don't want to talk about your own situation, just listen, because shared information is the best way to improve quality of life for yourself, your loved one, and everybody else.

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*Chapman is the author of the novel *Your Presence Is Requested* at Suvanto, a finalist for the PEN Center USA literary award in fiction. She is an assistant professor of English at UNLV and artistic director of the Beverly Rogers, Carol C. Harter Black Mountain Institute (see page 20).*



Hannah Birch

'12 BA JOURNALISM &
MEDIA STUDIES
GREENSPUN
COLLEGE OF
URBAN AFFAIRS

... about how to make the call

I had hired a freelance photographer and sent her to Mali to meet up with one of our reporters. I still couldn't quite believe it — me, hiring someone and sending them to Mali. Africa. She was a seasoned pro, expecting me to direct her like a photo editor would. I had exactly zero experience doing that.

One day she wanted to talk on the phone and I was terrified I was going to embarrass myself. (Sidenote: I love email. I fantasize about worlds where everyone communicates only via email.)

I wrote one very pathetic email about how I was new to ProPublica and didn't know what I was doing and, really, she should just talk to my boss instead. Then I sighed, deleted that email, and Googled "how to call Mali."

I managed to contain my surprise when the photographer sounded like she believed I knew what I was doing. We worked out assignment details and renegotiated the contract fee. It was a nice conversation. Nobody died. And now I know how to make a call to a remote village in Africa.

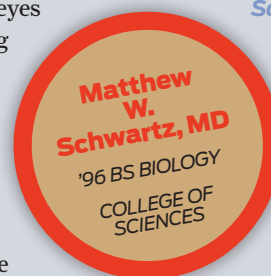
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Birch is a web producer for ProPublica in New York. She earned the prestigious Pulitzer Prize less than two years into her career for being a key player during the Seattle Times' breaking news coverage of the tragic Snohomish County mudslide in March 2014.



... AND DEALING WITH DEADLY VIRUSES

As a college student in the very early days of the Internet, my eyes were opened to how pairing advanced technology with the healing parts of medicine could increase the chance to save lives. I participated in undergraduate research with (former biology professor) Marcella McClure, and a team of graduate students. We collated and published DNA and RNA sequences of retro viruses, such as HIV, to find commonalities between them, and we worked with computer scientists, utilizing sophisticated models and software to crunch the data. I supposed it is less about being “clueless” per se ... but it is likely what led me to my career. Now, daily, I use sophisticated tools and regularly research new and advanced technologies to help attack and cure cancer.



Schwartz is a radiation oncologist at Comprehensive Cancer Centers of Nevada and serves as a member of the Radiation Executive Committee of the U.S. Oncology Network. He participates in clinical research and has authored and co-authored several papers on cancer research.

... ON HOW TO HANDLE MY MAJOR HEALTH CRISIS

I experienced a debilitating stroke at 31 years of age. During the first few weeks of therapy, I focused mainly on relearning basic life skills. After a few months though, I started regaining significant strength, coordination, and dexterity on the side of my body that was affected by the stroke. For the first time I had the thought, "I think I am going to be able to practice again!" Several months of therapy and healing followed that thought, but eventually it came to fruition.

The major lesson I've learned is the power that our thoughts have over our

Robert B. Hale, DMD
'09 DMD DENTISTRY
SCHOOL OF DENTAL
MEDICINE

lives. Mahatma Gandhi's teaching comes to mind. We may not have power or control over all of life's circumstances, but we do have control over our thoughts; and our thoughts determine our destiny.

...

Hale is a Salt Lake City-based endodontist who has published research on the

healing rates of endodontic techniques in the International Journal of Dentistry. He received the Student Achievement Award in Endodontics from the American Association of Endodontists and was able to begin practicing in his field even after suffering a debilitating stroke only six weeks prior to completing his residency.



... and in charge at 23

I was recruited by a large health organization to build a long-term care unit. I was pretty much fresh out of college but had gained some experience running a facility like this with another company. On my first day, someone handed me a crate (apparently to hold my belongings) and told me to find workspace "somewhere." For the next six months, I was desk-less and wandered from department to department sometimes with that silly crate as my chair. This was my research for building my own unit.

To the managers, I was like a flu season with no end, an annoying kid with too many annoying questions. I was kicked out of the dietetics department for not having a hairnet. The nurses told me there was nothing to learn since I wasn't a nurse; and I interviewed the maintenance guy on the roof while he fixed the AC system.

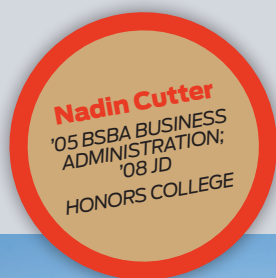
After half a year, I finally learned enough to develop and run my own site. I still work for the company today and my new recruits are never handed a crate.

Scott Hillegass
'95 BS HEALTH CARE
ADMINISTRATION
SCHOOL OF COMMUNITY
HEALTH SCIENCES



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Hillegass is president and CEO of Fundamental Clinical and Operational Services, a health care facility operator. He has more than 20 years of health care industry experience, including serving as vice president of Nevada Healthcare Administration, where he helped with the state's conversion of its Medicare reimbursement system.



... and throwing up before class

I think, for most Honors College students, when a subject is tough, we're used to diving hard into the textbooks. One of my toughest classes was in economics. Everyone before me talked about how hard the professor was, how difficult the concepts were. After a few weeks, though, I realized it wasn't that she didn't follow the textbook; it's that she used her own specific examples to illustrate the underlying economic models.

After that I never missed a minute of class. One time I was violently ill and I threw up in the parking lot twice. It's not a normal response to still go to class, but I think I would've felt even sicker not going — I wanted to hear every word that came out of her mouth. I had realized that I needed to change my strategy for learning information and that just reading the books wasn't good enough. But it was also the first time I realized that I really could adapt when I felt out of my element.

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*Managing partner of Cutter Law Firm, **Cutter** represents clients in business litigation, family law, judgment and debt collection, and estate planning. Previously, she served as judicial law clerk in District Court and practiced for a national law firm in trial advocacy, civil litigation, and construction defect matters. She was voted by her peers as one of Southern Nevada's Top 100 Lawyers in 2011, 2013 and 2015 by Nevada Business magazine.*



EDWARD J. QUIRK, a past president of the UNLV Foundation Board of Trustees, received the association's Silver State Award, its highest honor for a nonalumnus. A longtime supporter, he was board president when UNLV embarked on its first comprehensive fundraising campaign. He is a member of the UNLV Golf Foundation and was a founder and chair of the UNLV Research Foundation. Professionally, he is a partner with Greenberg Traurig and focuses on intellectual property law.



LINDA NORVELL MARQUIS, '03 JD, received the Alumna of the year award from the William S. Boyd School of Law. Marquis is the presiding judge in Department B at the Clark County Family Court. After graduation, she focused her legal practice on criminal law and juvenile abuse and neglect cases. She has served as the school's alumni chapter president and was awarded the Access to Justice Award for outstanding service in 2006.

Education professor **JOSEPH JOHN MORGAN**, '07 M.Ed Special Education and '12 PhD Special Education, received the Faculty Member of the Year Award. Morgan has been involved with numerous grant-funded special education research projects and serves on the editorial boards of several prestigious academic journals. He has served as an advocate and spokesperson for education in the state.



NOTES
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1960s

Jon Cobain, '64 BS Business Administration, UNLV's first graduate, is a specialist in middle market (\$10 million- to \$100 million-size) mergers and acquisitions. He has worked in more than 200 industries in 33 state and six countries. His hobbies include travel, tennis, swimming, theatrical events, charitable events, and "some poor golf." He is married to businesswoman and author J.A. Flynn. They have a son, a daughter, and two grandchildren. They live in Henderson.

Edward Bazar, '65 BS Business Administration, '75 MBA, and his wife, Karen, moved to Naples, Florida, in June 2014.

1970s

Jack Werner, '72 BA Political Science, left the federal government as the director of the energy office and became the executive director of the Institute for Sustainable Power, which develops and administers international energy training standards, and also became an assessor for the American National Standards Institute. He also is an expert advisor to the International Renewable Energy Agency in developing an international/regional renewable energy/energy efficiency standards/certification program for 15 West African countries. Additionally, he serves as a senior fellow of the Climate Institute, which is involved in climate change policy, and a senior associate of the Stella Group, a strategic marketing and policy firm. He lives in Washington, D.C.

Gregg Nelson, '74 BS Hotel Administration, is general manager of the Napili Kai Beach Resort. He lives in Lahaina, Hawaii.

William "Kevin" Haggerty, '75 BS Hotel Administration, retired last year after spending 30 years with ARAMARK Sports and Entertainment as general manager and resident district manager at stadiums, arenas, and racetracks that hosted a variety of events including professional football, baseball, and hockey as well as World Cup events. He also spent seven years with Hyatt Hotels as director of convention services in a number of cities. Cooking, golfing, and fishing are his hobbies. He lives in San Diego.

David Johnson, '75 BA Political Science, has joined the Las Vegas law office of Duane Morris as a partner in its trial and gaming law practice groups. He retired as executive vice president, general counsel, and secretary of Global Cash Access. He previously had served as general counsel for International Game Technology, Anchor Gaming, and Bally Technologies. He has more than 30 years of experience in corporate law, regulatory law, and civil litigation with a focus on the gaming and financial services industries. He earned his law degree from Creighton University.

Richard Wilson, '75 BA Anthropology, '79 MA Anthropology, worked 31 years as a quality assurance specialist in ammo surveillance for the U.S. Army as a civilian. He lived in several countries including Korea, Panama, Kuwait, and Afghanistan, and traveled on business to



Our 'First' Doctor

STEPHEN LAZARUS' LAS VEGAS TALE starts off like a movie cliché: A good Midwestern kid is traumatized by his father's death, flunks out of school, and drifts to Sin City in 1959 with \$50 in his pocket and hungry for a job. A high-pressure medical career — and earning the informal title of UNLV's first student to go to medical school — were the furthest things from his mind.

"(UNLV) basically saved my life," said Lazarus, '66 BA Psychology. "Without it, I wouldn't have ever gotten back on track."

Lazarus immersed himself in his books after his father died in a plane crash. "Overnight I became a straight-A student," he remembers. "I was one of the original nerds." Those grades earned him a University of Michigan scholarship to study nuclear physics, "but I had no social experience. I sort of went haywire," he said. He soon flunked out, and worked some odd jobs until landing at the Nevada Club and becoming a door greeter and then a dealer.

In 1961, the Army drafted Lazarus and he was stationed in France, where his Fremont Street skills paid off. He pocketed money dealing craps and loan sharking in the barracks, he said. The Army wasn't impressed and rejected his re-enlistment. So back to Las Vegas and dealing cards he went. One afternoon, strictly on a whim, he drove out to "that new school way out on Maryland Parkway" and enrolled

in a philosophy and psychology class. His academic skills, dormant for years, were revived and given new life. "The instructors were excellent. They were new, young talent from all the top West Coast schools ... they inspired me and rekindled my interest in academics."

He went on to the University of Oregon School of Medicine and then California's San Bernardino County Medical Center, where he discovered the then-emerging field of emergency medicine. "Every case was like a puzzle to be solved ... and I love puzzles," he said.

In 1973, he was instrumental in opening a new emergency room at Redlands Community Hospital, where he remained the director of the department for the next 25 years. Lazarus was among the first in the country to become board certified when emergency medicine was formally recognized as a specialty in the 1980s. He retired from the field in 2011 but still runs the wound care facility in Placentia, Calif.

UNLV's new medical school, he said, shows that Las Vegas is placing a priority on education. "The institution will change the face of the city," he predicted. "It will encourage people to refresh their view of what Las Vegas is really all about — a multi-dimensional stage. The stigma of 'Sin City' is definitely in jeopardy of being replaced by something more defining and capturing."

— BRIAN SODOMA

A Second Life: Long workdays in the emergency room mean doctors enjoy stretches of days off, and Lazarus was not one to idle away the time. He has been an award-winning custom woodworker for 30 years and now displays his work in galleries and Southern California art shows. More at woodforthought.net.

many more. He says his anthropology background served him well in dealing with personnel in foreign countries. He was baptized and joined the Pilgrim Home Baptist Church at the age of 61. Woodworking in a field called intarsia is his hobby. He and his wife of 18 years operate a small tree farm in Wicksburg, Alabama. They enjoy traveling around the country, sometimes with grandchildren. The couple lives in Newton.

Ann Occhi, '76 AA Nursing, '79 BS Nursing, '92 MS Nursing, works as a supervisor for school nurses. She earned a master's degree in education from the University of Phoenix. She was a foster parent for eight medically fragile children and adopted five children. Her hobbies are biking, camping, and being part of a women's dragon boat team. She lives in Portland, Oregon.

Randy Garcia, '77 BS Business Administration, is the founder and chief executive officer of The Investment Counsel Co. He is Nevada's first certified investment management analyst. He serves on numerous community boards, including the 2016 Presidential Debate Steering Committee, the UNLV Foundation Board of Trustees, and the Las Vegas Area Council of Boy Scouts. He formerly served as chairman of the Nevada Taxicab Authority. This year Catholic Charities of Southern Nevada honored him with its Heart of Hope Award for his many contributions to their work in the community. He and his wife, Staci, have two sons and a daughter.

Bill Buckmaster, '78 Master of Education, has interviewed more than 5,000 newsmakers and has earned the reputation as Tucson's most trusted voice for news and information. His communications career spans nearly 50 years and includes television anchor positions at KICU-TV, Tucson, where he for 23 years hosted the iconic Arizona PBS news and public affairs program *Arizona Illustrated*. A one-time broadcast editor for the Associated Press, he has deep roots in radio serving as news director at stations in Las Vegas; Visalia, California; and Sierra Vista, Arizona. In 2010, he formed Bill Buckmaster Communications, which produces a daily newstalk program on Tucson's KVOI "The Voice." A five-time Emmy Award nominee, he has earned many honors, including the 2011 Golden Mic Award from American Advertising Federation; Silver Circle Lifetime Achievement Award from the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences; and the Citizen Medal, the highest civilian honor given by Pima County, Arizona. He even has the rare honor of his name on an asteroid. "20084 Buckmaster" orbits between Mars and Jupiter. Married for 43 years, he has travelled to 100 countries and all 50 states.

Nancy Forni Flagg, '79 BA Education, '92 MA English, recently edited a financial planning book written by Ron Vejrosteck. Her company, Finishing Touches Project Management, provides writing, editing, and proofreading services for a variety of local and national clients.



Wilson, '75



Buckmaster, '78



Edwards, '81



Drake, '86



Symanski, '87



Ferraro, '90

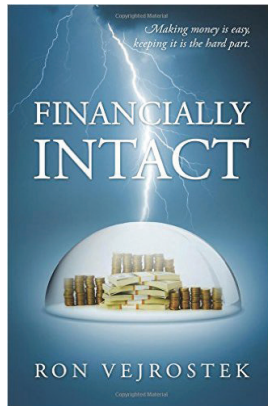
Marty Gross, '79 BS Hotel Administration, is vice president for King of Cage, one of the largest mixed martial arts promotions, owned by Lucas Oil. He has spent most of his career in the casino/hotel industry, including top-level positions at Cannery Casinos, Station Casinos, M Resort, the Riviera, and tribal gaming operations. He and his wife, Bonnie, have been married 34 years and have three children.

1980s

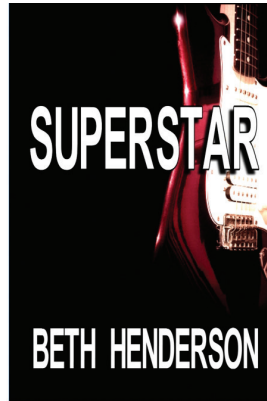
Denise Miller Cipolla, '80 BS Education, '80 BA English, '90 Master of Education, is coordinator of guidance and counseling for Conroe Independent School District in Texas. She previously spent four years as a high school English teacher and 25 years as a high school counselor. Her hobbies include traveling (38 countries so far), scuba diving, cooking, and spending time with grandchildren. She and her husband, **Craig Cipolla,** '81 BA Chemistry, '81 BS Engineering, celebrate their 35th anniversary in November. They live in The Woodlands, Texas.

Ken Edwards, '81 BS Hotel Administration, owns Hotel Management Online, which holds worldwide rights to HMBBookstore.com, and is managing partner for Tristar Hotel Group, which owns and operates hotels. He oversees development and acquisitions for Tristar. His hobbies include basketball, football, wine tasting, reading, cooking, and spending time in California. He lives in Phoenix.

Barbara Phillips, '81 BA Communication Studies, is retired, but politically active in Clean Energy Project, an energy conservation organization, and in volunteering for 2016 Democratic candidates. Previously, she worked for the public television station KLVX.



Flagg, '79



Daniels, '90

She plans to take a Danube Christmas market cruise. She and her husband, **Ronald Phillips,** '73 BS Management, have spent 10 years traveling around the county in recreational vehicles. Her hobbies include art and creative floral projects.

Timothy Bonenfant, '82 BA Music, '84 Master of Music, '05 DMA Music, gave a world premiere performance of "Persona No. 4," composed by UNLV music professor **Virko Baley,** this summer in Madrid. He previously recorded an album of Baley's works, *Multiple Personae: The Family of Clarinets*, which was released in 2014. He lives in San Angelo, Texas.

Perry Todd, '84 BS Hotel Administration, is a table games supervisor. He has spent 40 years working in gaming and food and beverage, including stints as restaurant manager and food and beverage manager, with his jobs taking him to both coasts. He is a member of the Screen Actors Guild – American Federation of Television and Radio Artists. His hobbies include traveling and reading plays. He has been married for 16 years.

Ron Drake, '86 BS Business Administration, '89 MBA, is managing director of sales for Caesars Entertainment. He lives in Henderson.

Lisa Ransom, '86 BA English, has worked primarily in the field of telephone customer service. Her hobbies include travel, animal rescue, wildlife conservation, veterans' issues, retiree issues, sewing, knitting, and crafts.

Daniel Royal, '86 BS Biology, '03 JD, has patents pending for obtaining pluripotent stem cells from autologous blood. He is the medical director at Royal Medical Clinic in Henderson.

Vida Chow, '87 BS Hotel Administration, '06 Master of Hotel Administration, is director of talent management/Asia Pacific for Hyatt Hotels and Resorts. She lives in Hong Kong.

Shannon Hume Shogren, '87 BA History, is homeschooling her youngest child and working from home for an online event ticket company. After receiving her law degree from California's McGeorge School of Law in 1990, she passed the Nevada Bar exam and spent eight years working for the state of Nevada as an unemployment appeals referee. She also worked in human resources for a nursing home. Her hobbies include serving as musical director for the local community theater company and sometimes appearing on stage in small character roles. Her son, **Carnell Johnson,** '06 Bachelor of Music, is a gondolier at the Venetian. She and her husband have a combined family of four children. They live in Cambridge, Minnesota.

Leon Symanski, '87 BS Business Administration, '94 Master of Public Administration, '01 JD, is an attorney at Craig P. Kenney & Associates. Before attending law school, he worked 10 years in the hotel/casino industry. During his undergraduate years, he played for the Runnin' Rebels. His hobbies include golf, reading, and thoroughbred horses. He is married to **Lisa Gentile Symanski,** '87 BA Communication Studies. They live in Henderson.

Richard Derrick, '88 BS Business Administration, '02 Master of Public Administration, is the chief financial officer for the city of Henderson. He leads the city's financial management services to the public, state agencies, bondholders, grantors, auditors, elected officials, and city departments. Under his leadership, Henderson has maintained one of the highest bond ratings of any city in the state. He has worked for the city since 1999, in a variety of positions, including manager of budget and strategic management, assistant to the city manager, assistant finance director, and finance director. His hobbies include spending time with family, hiking, camping, skiing, kayaking, backpacking, fishing, volleyball, and travel. He and his wife, **Bettyann Davis Derrick,** '88 BS Business Administration, '95 Master of Education, have been married 30 years. They have three children, **Leanna Derrick Mackelprang,** '11 BS Elementary Education; **Loeal Derrick Hemenway,** '14 BS Elementary Education; and **Richie Derrick,** who is a junior in UNLV's Lee Business School.

Tony Radovich, '88 BS Business Administration, is the owner of Nevada Bar & Restaurant Supply, Nevada Sports, and Madison Ave Bar & Grill. Golf and travel are his hobbies. He and his wife, Jeannie, live in Henderson.

1990s

Eric Berman, '90 BS Hotel Administration, is the regional vice president of BJ's Restaurants.

Bruce Claver, '90 BS Hotel Administration, is one of only a few hospitality experts employed by Lincoln Motor Co. As a consultant and ambassador, he trains employees at top Lincoln dealerships across the nation on the art and science of luxury hospitality service. He previously worked for Caesars Palace, Four Seasons, and the Union League Club. He lives in Glenview, Illinois.

Beth Daniels, '90 BA History, earned a master's degree in English composition from Wright State University. She now is retired from teaching English composition at two community colleges, but continues her career as a novelist. Her most recently published book is *SUPERSTAR*. She has published 29 books under various names. She is in the process of moving away from romance and into fantasy and mystery. She for many years served as around-the-clock caregiver for her parents. Now that both her parents have died, she has moved from her Ohio hometown and is settling into her new home in Louisville, Kentucky.

Diane Hornsby Ferraro, '90 BA English, is chief marketing officer for Solana Marketing and currently is providing marketing consulting services at Chapel of the Flowers on the Strip and at Tropicana LV Weddings at the Tropicana. More than 20 years of marketing experience in a variety of industries, including fine jewelry, luxury goods, mobile phones, earphones, educational products, and non-profit organizations, inspired her to start her own agency. Specializing in advising start-up businesses, family-run companies, and entrepreneurs with aggressive growth and expansion plans, she helps other companies with digital and traditional marketing and advertising, social media, and public relations. She lives in Denver.

Matt Engle, '91 BS Business Administration, is chairman of the board for the Las Vegas Natural History Museum and is heading its expansion committee efforts. He received the 2015 Achievement in Service Award from the Alumni Association, see page 30.

Heidi Almase, '92 BA Psychology, '96 MA Psychology, '01 JD, was elected to Las Vegas Municipal Court in 2011 and is serving a six-year term. In 2013, she was nominated to serve a two-year term on the Nevada Judicial Council. In February, she was named an alternate judicial member to the Commission on Judicial Discipline. She is married to attorney Caesar Almase. They have three children.

Christopher Bond, '92 BS Hotel Administration, has been promoted to vice president of sales at the Mirage. He oversees convention sales, convention services, and catering. He is married to **Serena Arce Bond,** '95 BS Business Administration. They live in Henderson.

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A Teacher with Heart

The noise made by jostling students in the hallways, the questions posed by his pupils, and the announcements over the public address system, all are music to **Martin Vece's** ears.

For the 10 months Vece, '06 Master of Education, was on medical leave, he longed to return to his classroom at Canyon Springs High School. This fall the English teacher got his wish. And now he's waiting for another wish to come true. Martin Vece needs a heart transplant.

Last November he was admitted to UCLA Medical Center and had open-heart surgery to attach a left ventricular assist device that now pumps blood for his heart. He needed to stay near UCLA for months after the surgery, forcing his family of five to move to Los Angeles temporarily. The financial burden has been tremendous, Vece said, adding that they couldn't have made it without the help of family, friends, and fundraising. The family registered him with the nonprofit organization HelpHopeLive to assist with the fundraising.

Vece has risen to No. 22 on the transplant list on the West Coast and is hoping to have a new heart within the next six months. Hoping along with him are his wife, Elizabeth, and their three girls: Ava, 8; Lucia, 7; and Rosalee, 2.



Erin Maloney, '92 BS Mechanical Engineering, sat for and passed the mechanical engineering – thermal fluids principles and practices of engineering exam in April.

Brian Slipock, '92 BS Hotel Administration, has purchased a hair salon, Mad About Hair. For the past 13 years he has owned Jackson's Bar and Grill. He is married to **Robin Harris Slipock**, '93 BS Hotel Administration. They have a teenage daughter, Dina, who is described by her father as a "future Rebel."

Jon Thumin, '92 BA Liberal Studies, is a special education teacher in Des Moines, Washington.

Lynn Tynan, '92 BA Political Science, recently retired, but has her own jewelry business, is a professional actress locally, and does property management. She previously owned her own tour company, served as director of a women's substance abuse center, and organized recovery events. She has sung with the UNLV Women's Choir for more than 10 years, plays tournament badminton, and enjoys traveling to see friends and family, including her three grandchildren. She recently traveled to upstate New York for her 50th high school reunion.

Mika Takasaki Koike, '94 BS Hotel Administration, is an interpreter for Japan's Yokohama District Court and an instructor at Sundai Travel & Hotel College. Her hobbies include volleyball and exercising in the gym. She is married and has two daughters and one son. The family lives in Yokohama.

Linda Gray Norcross, '94 BA Political Science, '04 JD, recently transitioned from private practice to assistant general counsel for Aristocrat Technologies. Previously, she worked for the Las Vegas office of Howard & Howard. She was named a Mountain States "Super Lawyer" for 2015 by Super Lawyers. Also this year she was named to the "Legal Elite" and "Best Up and Coming Attorneys" lists by *Nevada Business* magazine.

James Williams, '94 BS Computer Science, is a firmware engineer. Tennis and flying are among his hobbies. He lives in Reno.

Shifon Foster Berumen, '95 BA Interdisciplinary Studies, teaches U.S. and world history at Chino High School in California. Her hobbies include hiking, kayaking, and motorcycle riding. She and her sons, Jared and James, have two dogs.

Robert Cortez, '95 Bachelor of Music, teaches instrumental music at Mexico Senior High School in Mexico, Missouri. Previously, he spent 10 years as a band director with the Clark County School District. He was inducted into the Phi Beta Mu International Bandmasters Fraternity in 2013 and serves on the board of the Missouri Alliance for Arts Education. A fourth degree member of the Knights of Columbus, he enjoys traveling with student groups and with his family. He and his wife, Mikelle, have three children, Alex, Ryan, and Nic.

Darrell Husband, '95 BS Business Administration, is an attorney in the Phoenix office of Quarles & Brady. He is in the real estate practice group. Among those he represents are financial institutions, local and regional banks, private lenders, and private equity funds. He received his law degree at Pepperdine University.

Karmen Smith, '95 Master of Social Work, has been a child and family intervention specialist with Clark County Family Services for 20 years. She also is the founder of NSITEFUL, a spiritual enlightenment company that uses social media to spread the wisdom of the universe that "you are the one" to change your life and

the world. A spiritual teacher and an ordained minister, she has written a book, *The 'I AM' Solution: Five Practices to Ignite Your Inner Hero*, which will be published later this year. She lives in Henderson.

Dawn Nation Ward, '95 BA Theatre Arts, is the only full-time paralegal instructor for the online paralegal program at Cerro Coso Community College. Previously, she practiced law in Ohio. She lives in Ridgecrest, California.

Sondra Cosgrove, '96 BA History, '04 PhD History, is a professor and former Faculty Senate chair at the College of Southern Nevada. President of the League of Women Voters of the Las Vegas Valley, she also serves as first vice president of the League of Women Voters of Nevada.

Michael Higdon, '97 MA Communication Studies, '01 JD, is an associate professor of law and the director of legal writing at the University of Tennessee College of Law in Knoxville. He teaches constitutional law, family law, legal writing, and sexuality, gender and the law.

Cindy Kern, '97 BS Education, '07 Master of Education, '13 PhD Secondary Education, has been named a

visiting assistant professor of education and director of the Bristol-Myers Squibb Center for Science and Teaching at Quinnipiac University in Connecticut. The center is a network of scientists, engineers, and educators collaborating to advance the art of science, technology, engineering, and math education from kindergarten to the university level. She previously was an assistant professor at the University of New Haven in Connecticut. Previously, she taught at Green Valley High School for 16 years and served as an adjunct science professor at UNLV. She and her husband, Jason, have a son, Khorbin.

Catherine Mazzeo, '97 BA Psychology, '02 JD, will be the 2016 president of the Clark County Bar Association.

Michael Berk, '98 BS Hotel Administration, recently became director of catering for JW Marriott Denver Cherry Creek. He will lead the team of catering and event managers. He has spent the majority of his career with Four Seasons Hotels and Resorts, most recently serving as the director of catering at the Four Seasons Denver. He also has worked at Four Seasons Jackson Hole (Wyoming) and Four Seasons Resort and Club Dallas.



Anne Alama Carpenter, '98 Master of Public Administration, is a captain with the Nevada Highway Patrol, responsible for the commercial, rural, and urban day shift operations. In March she received the Public Safety Award from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration and the Safety Communications Award from the Strategic Highway Safety Plan/Zero Fatalities for the "It Can Wait for 28" Distracted Driving Program.

Angie Staples Abdelmonem, '99 BA Anthropology, is completing her doctoral degree in anthropology at Arizona State University (ASU) with a research specialization in sexual violence, social movements, non-governmental organizations, transnational feminism, and Egypt and the Middle East. Her dissertation explores the cultural politics of grassroots activism to combat public sexual violence in Egypt. She is a faculty associate with ASU's global technology and development program. She also is part of a British Academy-funded project exploring media, public sexual violence, and respectability. She is married and has three children. She divides her time between North Las Vegas, Arizona, and Egypt.

Jesse Oakley III, '99 BS Civil Engineering, is a supervisor II associate engineer for the Nevada Department of Transportation. He is a published author, having penned *Greetings Happy People: The Positive Words and Wisdom*



Bond, '92



Norcross, '94



Tynan, '92



Berumen, '95

Through the Eyes of Mr. I-I-I. He served as the 2012-13 District 33 governor for Toastmasters International, serving clubs in Southern Nevada and central California. This summer, he and his wife, Dana, served as host district co-chairs of the 2015 Toastmasters International Convention, which took place at Caesars Palace. They have been married since July 1, 2012.

Charles "Mike" Prince, '99 BA Elementary Education, is the recipient of the Will Rogers Medallion for best Western novel for young adults in 2014 for his latest book, *Flint Pierce, the Adventures of a Young Nevada Cowboy*. This is his second Will Rogers



Prince, '99

Medallion. He currently is working on a book about Flint Pierce and the Arizona Strip outlaws. He retired this year from teaching science and math at Pahrangat Valley Middle School. Raising cattle is one of his hobbies. He and his wife, Jean, live in Alamo.

Todd Weinstein, '99 MS Hotel Administration, launched Gavia Partners to provide executive coaching, leadership development, and consulting services to clients in hospitality, technology, and specialty retail. He has focused his efforts in human resources positions in the areas of employee relations, leadership development, talent management, and organizational change at Bally's and Paris Las Vegas, as well as Expedia.com and PetSmart. He is an avid trail cyclist, independent film enthusiast, musician, and cook. He and his wife, **Beth Appelbaum Weinstein**, '98 MS Hotel Administration, live in Phoenix.

Tony Zaranti, '99 BS Hotel Administration, is general manager of the Summit Club in Tulsa, Oklahoma. Previously, he served as assistant general manager at Ridglea Country Club as well as at Colonial Country Club in Fort Worth, Texas. His hobbies include golf, travel, food, and boutique wines. He and his wife, Christi, live in Bixby with their two rescue dogs, Riley and Allie.

2000s

Barbara Britton, '00 BS Business Administration, is retired from California's Napa County where she worked as the property tax manager for the auditor-controller department. She lives in Yountville.

Dolores Campuzano-Pignatello, '00 BS Hotel Administration, is director of banquet operations at The Mirage Resort and Casino. In 2014 she received the highest honor given by MGM Resorts International, the Terrance J. Lanni Award for Excellence. This year she received the Glass Ceiling Award from NAWBO. She chairs the Hispanic/Latino Network Group at MGM Resorts International and serves on the board of the Women's Chamber of Nevada. She has worked with MGM Resorts for more than 12 years. Previously, she worked for Disney World in Florida. Her hobbies include family, friends, faith, travel, music, animals, arts, culture,

Broadway, movies, and the outdoors. She and her husband, Joseph Pignatello, have been married four years. They have two daughters, four sons, and three dogs.

Mike La Vita, '00 BS Hotel Administration, is a senior event planner and team lead in the conferences and events department for Commonwealth Financial Network. He plans and executes networking, educational, and incentive conferences. His hobbies include travel, golf, cooking, poker, and movies. Married since 2013, he lives in Milton, Massachusetts.

Richard Rawson, '00 BS Business Administration, '04 JD, earned a Master of Laws degree with a concentration in business transactions from the University of Alabama School of Law in August. He is a managing partner for Ballard Rawson in Las Vegas.

Genie Serrano, '00 BA Psychology, '03 JD, is the owner of Peaceful Transformations, a mediation firm specializing in divorce, child custody, and asset and debt division.

Robert Beyer, '01 JD, and his wife, Sandy, welcomed their second son, Ace, in November 2014. They reside in Hoboken, New Jersey.

Natalie Cox, '01 JD, is a trial attorney with the U.S. Department of Justice, office of the U.S. trustee, in Wilmington, Delaware.

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Nicole Gagnon Davis, '01 BA English, '04 Master of Education, is director of the Learning Center at Bishop Gorman High School. Her husband, **Stephen Davis**, '12 BA Public Administration, currently is enrolled in the Boyd School of Law. The couple has two children, Faith and MacGyver.

Mark Jackson, '01 JD, is a foreign service officer at the U.S. State Department in Washington, D.C., where he manages the human rights portfolio for sub-Saharan Africa on child labor and slavery, religious freedom, and disability rights. He co-manages the portfolio for child soldiers; human trafficking; lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender issues; and refugees. He serves as the lead for the Bureau of African Affairs and oversees regional human rights program funding and management.

Steven Krinsky, '01 JD, opened his Los Angeles-based criminal defense firm, Law Office of Steven Krinsky, in July. Previously, he spent 13 years as a public defender for Los Angeles County.

Gail Clark Lorenzo, '01 BS Business Administration, is a dental hygienist. She has a son, James, and a daughter, Elaine.

Nancy Olson, '01 BS Business Administration, just celebrated her first anniversary as an assistant U.S. attorney for the district of Oregon. She prosecutes a variety of white collar and fraud-based cases in collaboration with federal law enforcement agencies. She lives in Eugene.

Ian Zabarte, '01 BA Communication Studies, describes himself as "from backpack, to briefcase, to hardhat," having switched careers from working in human resources to being an electrician.

David Engler, '02 BA Theatre, recently was promoted to front office manager at the Hampton Inn and Suites Hampton Cove in Huntsville, Alabama. He lives in Harvest.

Paola Armeni Androvandi, '03 JD, is now with the firm of Gentile, Cristalli, Miller, Armeni & Savarese.

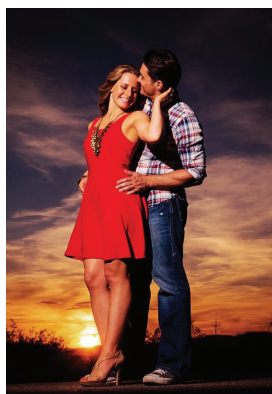
Adriana Fralick, '03 JD, is chief deputy district attorney in the Carson City district attorney's office.

Jamie Weaver Rauch, '03 BA Psychology, has worked in the pharmaceutical industry for 10 years and currently is employed by GlaxoSmithKline. Her hobbies include travel, decorating, spending time with family, history, and arts and crafts. She and her husband, **John Rauch**, '00 BS Fitness Management, have two children, Jackson and Jenavive. The family lives in Henderson.

Juan Rodriguez, '03 BS Biology, was named a Mountain States "Rising Star" for 2015 by Super Lawyers. He is an attorney in the intellectual property



Rauch, '00, '03



Costanza, '06, Sibley, '07

section of the Las Vegas office of Howard & Howard.

Ericka Aviles, '04 BS Hotel Administration, is director of sales & strategic partnerships for Bonotel Exclusive Travel. Founded more than 25 years ago, the company is one of the largest luxury inbound tour operators specialize in high-end luxury resort accommodations throughout North America. She oversees the sales and strategic efforts for the Americas. She also serves on the alumni board of the Hotel College. Her hobbies include traveling, spending time with friends and family, working out, and practicing yoga.

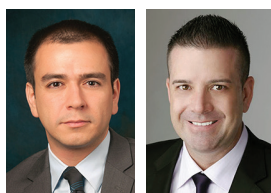
Audrey Beeson, '04 BA Political Science, '07 JD, is a Nevada board-certified family law specialist. She also serves as a mentor for the Nevada State Bar's TIP (transitioning into practice) mentoring program, which provides transitional support to attorneys newly admitted to the bar who have less than five years' experience. She is an attorney at the law offices of Frank J. Toti.

Lawrence Hill, '04 BA Political Science, '10 JD, was named as "Legal Elite 2015" by Nevada Business magazine and as a "Rising Star -Mountain States 2015" by Super Lawyers.

Jennifer Hostettler, '04 BA Criminal Justice, '10 JD, is now the personnel chief for the Nevada attorney general's office.

Jeanne Lambertsens, '04 JD, practices family law as an associate with Webster & Associates.

Ben Mazal, '04 MS Sports & Leisure Service Management, is manager of



Rodriguez, '03 Manfredi, '05



Gardineer, '05



Hadden, '05

parks, open space, and golf for the city of Lafayette, Colorado. He has one daughter, Isabel, 9.

Cami Perkins, '04 JD, is a partner and shareholder at the Las Vegas office of Holley, Driggs, Walch, Puzey & Thompson.

Casper Sesto, '04 BA Psychology, is a school counselor for the Clark County School District. He also hosts a weekly Internet talk radio show called "Dr. S.: Mind, Body, & Soul. What is Your Truth?" and a morning Inspirational Moments with Dr. S. webinar. His hobbies include biking, meditation, and eating healthy foods.

Shane Young, '04 JD, serves as general counsel for Provident Trust Group, Las Vegas.

Nadin Cutter, '05 BS Business Administration, '08 JD, celebrated the fourth anniversary of her firm, Cutter Law Firm, this year. She practices family law, business litigation and personal injury. She was named the 2015 Alumna of the Year for the Honors College (see page 30).

Lisa Dell, '05 BA Communication Studies, recently was named vice president, marketing for Olive Films. While at UNLV she was advertising manager of the *Rebel Yell*.

Michael Gardineer, '05 BA Philosophy, '09 Executive MBA, is CEO and

co-founder of Command Global, a firm that develops and markets nutritional supplements globally. His hobbies include weight training, grappling, shooting, cattle ranching, and spending time with family. He and his wife, Kristen, have three children, Lauren, 9, Beau, 7, and Jude, 3.

Robyn Hadden, '05 MS Hotel Administration, is the assistant director for special events for Ohio State University's Wexner Medical Center as well as for the university's Arthur G. James Cancer Hospital and Richard J. Solove Research Institute. On July 4, she married Scott Flowers. The couple lives in the small town of Washington Court House.

Tina Jagerson, '05 JD, received a master's degree in library and information science from California's San Jose State University School of Information in May. She lives in Denver.

Danny Lovell, '05 JD, now has his own practice, Law Offices of Dan J. Lovell, specializing in bankruptcy, family law, and criminal law.

Aaron Manfredi, '05 BA Criminal Justice, '14 Master of Public Administration, is the founder/executive director of the nonprofit Asperger's Training, Employment and Life Skills. Previously, he was employed by the Clark County School District, teaching middle school reading and emotionally challenged students and coaching varsity football for Sierra Vista High School. He also has worked as a juvenile probation officer. A veteran of Operation Desert Storm, he earned the Southwest Asian Medal with a Bronze Star. He played on the world champion U.S. Navy softball team and is a lifetime member of both the Veterans of Foreign Wars and the American Legion. He is a member of the UNLV Center for Autism Spectrum Disorders ambassador program. He earned a master's degree in justice management from UNR. His hobbies include softball, flag football, working out, and traveling. He has one son.

Brian Ballentine, '06 BS Secondary Education, is a former teacher for the Clark County School District who founded the Sunset Activist Collective. Ballentine spends time helping people and the planet.

Tiffany Lawrence Banning, '06 BS Business Administration, '12 JD, married Jesse Banning on June 27.

Alexis Brown, '06 BA Mathematical Sciences, '11 JD, celebrated the first anniversary of her firm, Alexis Brown Law, last December.

Sara Costanza, '06 BA Journalism and Media Studies, is a physician liaison at 21st Century Oncology. She is engaged to **JC Sibley**, '07 BS Kinesiology, director of wellness at Tim Soder Physical Therapy and Wellness. He played baseball at UNLV. She was a

cheerleader. The couple plans to marry in Cabo San Lucas, Mexico, in September 2016.

Timothy Geswein, '06 JD, has returned to his family and the practice of law after suffering from a life-threatening illness in 2014. He and his wife **Shemilly Briscoe**, '02 BA English, '06 JD, would like to offer heartfelt thanks to the law school and legal community for the thoughts, prayers, and assistance received during a difficult time. He is an attorney at Frias Transportation Management.

Autumn Santeler Henderson, '06 BA English, is general manager at Polar Tech Industries, a manufacturer of insulated containers and cold packs for perishable shipping in the food and biomedical industries. This year she was recognized in *Plastics News* in a story concerning women in the plastics industry. Her hobbies include fitness, spin cycling, and reading. Last year she married James Henderson. They opened a neighborhood gym, Total Fitness West Dundee. They live in West Dundee, Illinois.

Yvonne Randall, '06 EdD Special Education, is director of the School of Occupational Therapy at Touro University Nevada for the master of science in occupational therapy and the pending entry-level doctorate in occupational therapy academic programs. In January she will become the chairperson of the American Occupational Therapy Political Action Committee.

Rikki Tanenbaum, '06 Master of Hotel Administration, is thrilled to be back in Las Vegas where she recently joined Golden Nugget Casinos as the senior vice president of marketing for the Nevada region. Previously, she spent nearly five years moving around the South and Midwest in marketing roles for Penn National Gaming.

Shaun Tuch, '06 BS Hotel Administration, has expanded and franchised his Professor Egghead business, a company that provides science and engineering education to children. He hopes to expand to Las Vegas soon. He lives in Los Angeles.

Karen Whelan, '06 JD, was chosen as one of six attorneys nationwide to attend the 2015 International Fellows Program in Washington, D.C. The fellows will conduct research and projects centered on the theme "Innovative Prosecutorial and Crime Fighting Strategies." Articles prepared by the group will be presented in New York at the end of the fellowship. She is a prosecutor in the special prosecutions division of the Nevada attorney general's office. In 2012, she raised funds for village families under the untouchable caste in Nepal to receive electrical power in their homes.

Adam Woodrum, '06 JD, is now a partner at Woodrum Law. He specializes in criminal defense, white-collar crime, appeals, and habeas corpus.



OBITUARIES

Brock Dixon, former UNLV acting president, died from congestive heart failure June 13 at the age of 96. He passed away in Australia where he had lived since 1986. He served as acting president from 1978 until 1979 between the presidencies of Donald Baeppler and Leonard "Pat" Goodall. Among the projects with which he was involved were the acquisition of the Flashlight sculpture and the planning of the Thomas & Mack Center. Dixon, who arrived at UNLV in 1971, held a number of positions, including dean of administrative services and vice president for administration. After his presidency, he joined the department of public administration where he taught until his retirement in 1985. Born Dec. 18, 1918, in Huron, South Dakota, Dixon was an officer in the U.S. Navy during World War II, participating in the Battle of Iwo Jima.



Lon Spight, Dec. 6, 1973

Lon Spight, associate professor of physics and astronomy, died July 6. He earned his Ph.D. in physics from UNR in 1969 and began teaching at UNLV that same year. He still was on the faculty at the time of his death 46 years later, making him the longest serving faculty member in his department. He had at various points served as department chair, graduate coordinator, and the department's representative on the College Curriculum Committee.

Joseph "Jay" Vogel, '96 BS Civil Engineering, died April 23 in Georgetown, Texas. A structural engineer, he was owner and president of Meadows Engineering in Georgetown.

Peter Whitaker, '13 BS Hotel Administration, died April 2. For the past three years he had worked as a front desk agent at Caesars Palace.

Maricar Andrade, '07 JD, of Andrade Law serves as the Public Information Committee chair for the Nevada Council for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and is an alternate hearing master for temporary protective orders in the family court division of Clark County District Court. She also coordinates a yearly Asian Pacific American Youth Leadership Symposium with the nonprofit Bamboo Bridges.

Jacqueline Jeanney Bluth, '07 JD, is the chief deputy district attorney for the special victim's unit at the Clark County District Attorney's Office.

Kerry Doyle, '07 JD, and **Tyler Crawford** '07 JD, opened their own Las Vegas practice, Thunder Law, earlier this year.

Amanda Hendrix-Komoto, '07 Master of Education, is an assistant professor of the American West at Montana State University in Bozeman. This year she completed her doctoral degree in history, specializing in the 19th century American West, at the University of Michigan. Her husband, **Jordan Komoto**, '08 Master of Education, is human resources manager of Ultra Electronics, which specializes in defense, aerospace, energy, transportation, and cybersecurity products. They have a daughter, Eleanor.

Shannon Neumann Inglet, '07 BA Chemistry, is the medication safety specialist for the Intermountain Medical Center in Murray, Utah. She earned a doctorate of pharmacy degree from the University of Utah. She and her husband, Quinton, married in 2010 and are expecting their first child this month. She says Quinton couldn't

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resist a woman in a lab coat and goggles. Her hobbies include running marathons (11 so far), traveling (10 countries on four continents), and cooking new foods from various cultures.

Darren Rodriguez, '07 BA Psychology, '12 JD, is an associate at Maier Gutierrez Ayon.

Tim Rogan, '07 BA Computer Science, works for one of the world's largest IT consulting firms. The job has allowed him to work in many different cities and for several Fortune 500 companies, including Procter & Gamble and Miller-Coors. On a day-to-day basis he manages several software development projects with multiple developers both onshore and offshore.

Amber Geremia, '08 Elementary Education, '11 Master of Education, has taught elementary school for seven years and now is a technology specialist. She also is head coach of the cross-country team at Andre Agassi College Preparatory Academy. She says that running taught her life skills such as goal setting, work ethic, and teamwork, and that she tries to instill these in the athletes with whom she works. Her hobbies include painting, drawing, crafting, watching comedies, and taking her dogs (including one named Reb) to the park. She and her husband, **Didier Lino**, '09 BS Business Administration, attend UNLV football and basketball games. They live in Henderson.

Kirk Homeyer, '08 BS Business Administration, '11 JD, joined Brownstein Hyatt Farber Schreck's Las Vegas office earlier this year as an associate in the firm's corporate department.

Marla Hudgens, '08 JD, relocated to Arizona, where she continues to maintain an appellate and commercial litigation practice in Phoenix.

Rene Labo, '08 BS Business Administration, is an insurance agent. His hobbies include playing on Mt. Charleston in the winter, playing tennis all year, reading, gaming, and riding anything with the word "board" in it — snowboard, wakeboard, etc. He lives in Henderson.

Christina Mamer, '08 BA Criminal Justice, '12 JD, is an associate at Wood, Smith, Henning and Berman.

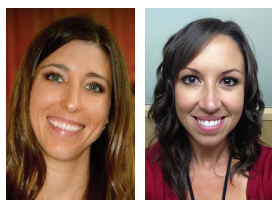
Teresa Thomason Manley, '08 BS Hotel Administration, '15 MS Hotel Administration, is the guest service trainer in food and beverage at Margaritaville in Bossier City, Louisiana. Previously, she was a catering manager, food and beverage manager, and club operations manager for the U.S. Air Force. Her hobbies include cooking, baking, reading, and swimming. She and her husband have one son, Josef. They live in Houghton.

Bret Meich, '08 JD, joined Downey Brand LLP in January. He lives in Reno.

Kristopher Milicevic, '08 BA Economics, '11 JD, opened his own firm, Milicevic & Associates, in 2014. He specializes in personal injury and worker's compensation.



Vail, '13



Henderson, '06

Inglet, '07

Rachel Silverstein, '08 JD, joined Littler Mendelson as a special counsel last year. She lives in Henderson.

Thaddeus "Toby" Yurek, '08 JD, joined Greenman, Goldberg, Raby & Martinez in August. His focus is workers' compensation claims. Before becoming a lawyer, he spent 20 years with the Henderson police department, obtaining the rank of lieutenant.

Margo Chernysheva, '09 JD, is with MC Law Group, a firm that advises and represents clients on matters of business-based and family-based immigration issues. They specialize in I-9 compliance, investor visas, employer-sponsored visas, NAFTA immigration services, sponsorship, and fiancé visas. Firm employees are fluent in several languages, including Spanish, French, Armenian, Russian, Tagalog, Mandarin, and Cantonese.

Kristie Fischer, '09 JD, launched a new website for her contract drafting and per diem attorney services company, Contract Guru.

Kelley Goldberg, '09 JD, joined the Neon Museum Board of Trustees. She is a shareholder at Brownstein Hyatt Farber Schreck and is the head of the Las Vegas office's intellectual property and technology department.

Amanda Ireland, '09 BA Economics, '13 JD, is an associate at Wilson Elser.

Rachel Jones, '09 BA Political Science, is an associate attorney at Kramer, deBoer and Keane in Woodland Hills, Calif. She lives in Sherman Oaks.

Alysson Thewes Love, '09 BS Social Work, '11 Master of Social Work, is the resident clinician at Lakeview Heights, an inpatient psychiatric facility. She recently became certified to practice equine-assisted psychotherapy and is engaged in postgraduate training to become a licensed clinical social worker. She enjoys spending time with her horse, dogs, and aquatic turtles. She lives in Heppner, Oregon.



Yurek, '08

Reyes, '13

Chelsea Milko, '09 BA Political Science, '09 BS Kinesiology, recently joined the government publishing office in Washington, D.C., as social media lead and assistant media liaison. Previously, she worked as the staff assistant to the inspector general for the U.S. General Services Administration and as a Center for Government Leadership Fellow with the Partnership for Public Service. In 2012, she received a master of public administration degree from Rutgers University. She served in Uganda as a Peace Corps volunteer.

Chelsea Pyasetsky, '09 JD, was named a partner at Thenell Law Group in Portland, Ore., where she leads the third-party, personal injury protection and uninsured/underinsured motorist litigation practice. She also is licensed in Nevada and Washington.

Krystal Gallagher Rosse, '09 JD, serves as an assistant U.S. attorney for the District of Nevada in the Las Vegas office.

Brittany Walker, '09 BA Political Science, is a project director for the Republican National Lawyers Association. She lives in Washington, D.C.

2010s

Kareema Mitchell Allen, '10 JD, and **Eric Allen**, '10 JD, are expecting their first child, a girl. They both practice at Allen Legal Services in Salt Lake City.

Edward Bobbett, '10 MS Hotel Administration, recently was promoted to front office manager of the Hyatt Regency Monterey in California. He also is a captain in the U.S. Air Force Reserve.

Mark Fernandez, '10 BA Criminal Justice, is the judicial executive assistant for District Judge Matthew Harter. Previously, he served as a courtroom clerk in District Court. He enjoys hiking, running, traveling, trying new cuisines, video gaming, and the occasional glass of wine.



Milko, '09

Adam Greenbaum, '10 BS Business Administration, has launched his own digital marketing consulting firm, GreenbaumDigital.com. The company offers small business digital marketing strategy, implementation, and continuing management. He and his girlfriend, another UNLV alum, own two Boston terriers, and a cat. They enjoy hiking and exploring nature. The couple lives in Denver.

Rafael Schatz, '10 BA Political Science, was appointed president of ServiceMax Green Cleaning Systems in January. Two months later, it won a top honor for "green business" from Nevada Business. His hobbies include going to gym and to movies, spending time outdoors, futbol, and "everything Rebel." He and his wife, Esther, enjoy spending time with their children.

Vincent Wood, '10 BA Psychology, recently was promoted to captain at SkyWest Airlines, flying Embraer 175 aircraft. This summer, he got engaged. His hobbies include weight lifting, ice hockey, soccer, riding motorcycles, and spending time with family and his dog, Rocky. He lives in Thornton, Colo.

Mabior Ayuen, '11 BS Business Administration, is founder and chief executive officer at the Graduates Network Center in Nevada and in the South Sudan, Africa. Its mission is to promote a social change in the community and strengthen unity among people. He earned an MBA from Regis University and a professional development program certificate from Harvard. He is pursuing a doctoral degree in management and finance at Walden University in Minnesota. His hobbies include bowling, camping, fishing, and reading.

Kimberly Delmonico, '11 JD, joined Egle Law Group's mass tort litigation team last year.

Jessica Green, '11 JD, an attorney with Lipson Neilson, was named as "Rising Star-Mountain States 2015" by Super Lawyers. This is the second year in a row that she has received the title.

Trevor Hewitt, '11 Master of Hotel Administration, continues to expand his Pizza Rock by Tony Gemignani and Slice House restaurants. Three new restaurants have opened in Las Vegas in the last year and four more are on the way. A total of 10 operate in Nevada and California.

Andrew Insigne, '11 BS Hotel Administration, is assistant director

of event marketing for TAO Group. He assists in conceptualizing, executing, and managing all aspects of events and partnerships at all of the company's newly redesigned nightclub and entertainment venues, including Marquee Nightclub & Dayclub at the Cosmopolitan, TAO Nightclub and TAO Beach at the Venetian, and LAVO at the Palazzo.

Brian John, '11 JD, will continue to work for the U.S. Navy Judge Advocate General Corps in Bahrain after serving two years as a defense attorney in southern Spain.

Amy Ma, '11 JD, founded Paleo Angel, dedicated to providing foods under the guidelines of the paleo diet and autoimmune protocol. The purpose of Paleo Angel is to nourish and educate individuals about the benefits and impact of whole foods and autoimmune disorders. She is an associate at Weinberg Wheeler Hudgins Gunn & Dial. She specializes in civil litigation.

Keith Pickard, '11 JD, drafted and was the principal lobbyist for assembly bill 263, which was enacted earlier this year by the Nevada Legislature. The law will harmonize previously conflicting rules regarding the bases for child custody determinations by dropping prior threshold tests based upon gender and prior marital status in favor of a "child-centered" test. It also adjusted the calculus for relocation cases so that the interests of the child are placed ahead of the tactical goals of a parent. He practices family law at his firm, Pickard Parry Pfau.

Debra Amens, '12 JD, operates a full-service law firm, Amens Law, which serves rural Nevada. With offices in Battle Mountain and Austin, the firm offers services such as family law, criminal defense, estate planning, environmental law, business formation, and trademarks to those residing in remote areas.

Alex Andres, '12 BA Theatre Arts, has landed his dream job as a LEGO model builder at Merlin Studios Carlsbad in California. Using the training he received at UNLV where his degree emphasis was in theatre design and technology, he builds models for existing and future LEGOLAND theme parks and LEGOLAND Discovery Centers around the world. His models have appeared in the parks in California and Florida and will be on display at the planned park in Dubai. Previously, he worked as an entertainment technician at the Mondavi Center for the Performing Arts at the University of California, Davis, and at Six Flags Discovery Kingdom in San Francisco. His hobbies include LEGO model building, video games, sports, ballroom dancing, interior design, art, film, and cooking. He is married and lives in Oceanside.

Matthew Carlyon, '12 JD, volunteered as a judge for the truancy diversion project in the Clark County School District. The project is an incentive-based program created to decrease absenteeism in all levels within the district.

Ashly Ryan, '12 BS Business Administration, started working for NV Energy

in January as the business coordinator for the renewable energy and origination department and was promoted to associate renewable energy analyst in July. She now is pursuing a graduate certificate in solar and renewable energy at UNLV. In the last year, she has traveled to the United Kingdom, France, Spain, and Mexico. She also enjoys playing tennis, sewing, reading, and playing with her golden retriever, Mickey.

Roxanne Angelie San Jose, '12 BA Political Science, is the author of *Annagram*, a fantasy fiction book for both young adults and adults. Her hobbies include reading and biking.

Richard Andrews, '13 JD, was commissioned as an officer in the U.S. Navy Judge Advocate General Corps in 2013. He is stationed at Washington Navy Yard in Washington, D.C. Earlier this year, he spent 10 weeks attending the Naval Justice School.

Frank Beninato, '13 JD, received a Master of Laws degree in taxation at the University of Miami School of Law this year.

Christopher Blinzinger, '13 MS Public Administration, has been the emergency manager for the city of Provo, Utah, since 2010. He served as chairman of the Utah County Local Emergency Planning Committee in 2014. This year he was elected

president of the Utah Emergency Management Association. His hobbies include bicycle touring of the West, backpacking in the Rocky Mountains, fishing, and reading history. He and his wife have a blended family of eight children. They live in Pleasant Grove.

Zachary Conine, '13 JD, founded Joseph Beare & Company, a management consulting firm that specializes in start-ups and large-scale feasibility work.

Tamara Prouty Day, '13 BA Psychology, has worked for the court system for more than 16 years. Her hobbies include hiking, camping, reading, and traveling. The mother of two has seven grandchildren and one more on the way. She lives in St. George, Utah.

Kelsey Fraga, '13 BA Journalism and Media Studies, began work right after graduation as an assistant account executive at HeBS Digital, a company that provides digital marketing for hotels. She since has received two Above and Beyond awards and was promoted this year to account executive. She is training for the Disneyland marathon. Other hobbies include taking workout classes and hiking. She lives in Henderson with her husband, three cats, and two dogs.

Josh Millan, '13 MS Hotel Administration, recently was promoted to project manager for retail, dining, and enter-

tainment for Pinnacle Entertainment. In his new role, he assists with developing and supporting implementation of the company's strategic engagement plan. Previously, he was manager of labor planning for the company.

Pete Reyes, '13 BA Psychology, recently was promoted to compensation and recruitment coordinator for UNLV's human resources department. He previously was a personnel technician 3. He is pursuing a master of public administration degree at UNLV. Before beginning his undergraduate studies, he spent a few years playing guitar in an indie rock band, In Aviate. The group released two albums through Rise Records and toured the nation numerous times. His hobbies include writing, recording, and playing music; attending music festivals; hiking; and camping. He lives in North Las Vegas.

Ann Sheahan, '13 JD, is the domestic violence court coordinator of the Ada County Domestic Violence Court in Boise, Idaho.

Mary Vail, '13 Executive MBA, was the executive producer of a public service announcement, "Float Like a Duck," which won an Award of Distinction in the 2015 International Videographer Awards competition. The PSA was a collaboration between Paragon Pools and Clark County. She represented Paragon Pools on the project. Among

her contributions were developing the concept, writing the script, coordinating the production, and scouting locations. Starring the family-friendly mascot, Duckie, the PSA promotes the importance of water safety, especially for people with children. It may be viewed on YouTube.

Jeffrey Fleming, '14 BA History, is completing a master's program in history archeology anthropology at Frances's Université de Pau et des Pays de l'Adour. Fleming, who minored in French at UNLV, says he wants to become the best professor possible in the transcultural study of French rural intellectual history. Soccer and reading are his hobbies. He lives in Pau.

Kandis McClure, '14 JD, joined Brownstein Hyatt Farber Schreck's Las Vegas office earlier this year as a policy advisor. She focuses on the Nevada state government.

Adriana Osorto, '14 BS Hotel Administration, is a management associate in the human resources department at the Luxor.

Shannon Phenix, '14 Master of Social Work, '14 JD, is a deputy public defender for Clark County.

Joseph Sakai, '14 JD, is an associate at Ballard Spahr specializing in all phases of litigation.

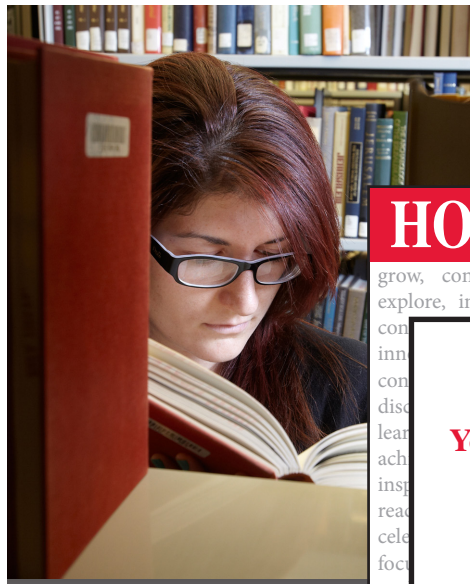
Rob Telles, '14 JD, opened his firm, Accolade Law, in March. The firm donates a portion of every fee to a nonprofit or charity that operates in Southern Nevada. He currently sits on committees at the Latin Chamber of Commerce, the Clark County Bar Association, the Las Vegas Rotary Club, and A-Tech Academy.

Andrew Williams, '14 BA Political Science, '14 BS Public Administration, works for Sen. Dean Heller, R-Nev., in Washington, D.C. He has been promoted to legislative correspondent, covering energy, environment, transportation, and natural resource issues for the senator. Previously, he worked as a staff assistant. He lives in Silver Spring, Maryland.

Dmetri Culkar, '15 BS Business Administration, is pursuing a law degree at the University of Michigan. His hobbies include trying new restaurants and bars as well as spending time with his girlfriend and his dogs. He lives in Ann Arbor.

Lee Gorlin, '15 JD, is a judicial clerk for Nevada Supreme Court Justice Michael Cherry.

Nicole Pedroza, '15 BA Psychology, is pursuing a master of social work degree at the University of Southern California.



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The Clock Tower

In December when the familiar bells toll on campus, they'll spread a little holiday cheer with "O'Tannenbaum," "Deck the Halls," and "Frosty, The Snowman." The carols replace the clock tower's usual "Westminster" chimes, which sound out every half hour from 7 a.m. to 10 p.m.

The lanky steel structure stands along the academic mall outside the Tam Alumni Center. It was installed in 1978, thanks to a donation by the Murray Peterson Foundation. Peterson, along with other family members, was one of the original owners of the Westward Ho Hotel and Casino.

The bells (or rather, the electronic emulation of cast bronze bells) are controlled by an electronic carillon that can play any patterns at any time using a 25-note keyboard. UNLV facilities electricians maintain the clock and synchronize its movement monthly.

Clock towers are often found on university campuses, town squares, and churches. In the 1800s they served a practical purpose since few people had watches. Today, they are more symbolic.

There were plans in the early 1990s to erect a tower with more heft, something that could serve as an iconic symbol of UNLV. The plan called for a "campus campanile and bell tower" and even offered a rendering of a full brick structure "to identify the campus' center of academic activity." The new clock tower was to incorporate a spotlight with a vertical beam that would shine at night. On special occasions the neon would be scarlet, the report suggested.

[Photo: R. Marsh Starks]

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